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Co-Chairperson: Ms. Tarja Halonen ..... (President of the Republic of Finland)
Co-Chairperson: Mr. Sam Nujoma ..... (President of the Republic of Namibia)

The meeting was called to order at 9 a.m.

Addresses on the occasion of the Summit *(continued)*

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will first hear an address by His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani, Amir of the State of Qatar.

Sheikh Al-Thani (*spoke in Arabic*): It is a source of pleasure and pride for us to address, on behalf of the State of Qatar and its people, and before this honourable gathering, the Millennium Summit held by the General Assembly at United Nations Headquarters. We congratulate and salute Secretary-General Kofi Annan and his staff for their fruitful efforts in organizing this meeting.

It is no coincidence that most statements delivered from this podium since the Summit began have focused on the subject of globalization. This phenomenon, which is the product of economic, social, cultural and technological developments and breakthroughs in the field of information, has become not only a major factor in the process of political decision-making, but a standard for determining the elements of international relations.

We find ourselves talking about a world of diminished distances and dimensions, of easy means of communications among peoples and nations, by virtue of the emerging means that the informatics revolution has provided; a world in which we witness with great admiration the giant strides taken and the impressive results achieved through scientific research, particularly during the last decade of the previous century.

It is regrettable, however, that in this same world, technological and even linguistic illiteracy are widespread among the majority of its peoples. Approximately 1 billion of its inhabitants suffer in abject and disgraceful poverty. As a result of the economic invasion, the economies of many countries are threatened with permanent crises and stifling debts. Moreover, its natural environment is deteriorating due to abusive exploitation, which runs counter to the recommendations of numerous international forums, particularly the Conference held at Rio de Janeiro.

Is this not the way things really are? Is this state of affairs not far removed from the ideal of building on Earth and honouring human beings advocated by all religions and enshrined by international norms and covenants? As we take part in this international forum, which embodies the universality of man, are we not supposed to stand together, to think and consider the ideal formula for restoring normalcy and making up for what is lost before it is too late? We, as individuals and groups, have a great responsibility to bear with integrity in the service of present and future generations.

To achieve a better future for humanity and to realize the principles of the United Nations is

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impossible without collective political will, wherein all parties in the international community cooperate with each other in one concerted effort with the aim of adopting a strategy aimed essentially at narrowing the economic and scientific gap among States and at ensuring to the optimum the fair utilization of the fruits of technological progress. We believe that the United Nations is qualified to formulate an international system that includes globalization and spreads its blessings on all humanity, while curbing its negative effects.

Here, we should like to lay out our viewpoint concerning the procedural steps that may ensure the success of such a strategy. First, we firmly believe that the objective condition for bringing nations closer together lies in establishing a comprehensive educational plan based on eliminating linguistic illiteracy, promulgating compulsory education and providing opportunities for harnessing information technology in the service of the goals of development. The human being of the third millennium cannot be satisfied merely by knowing how to write, but should be able to master the use of the modern means of communication and to freely express his ideas and to discuss those of other people.

Secondly, in order to improve the economic situation of developing countries, particularly the poorest among them, serious consideration should be given to cancelling the debts of poor States. We believe that it may be useful for these debts to be converted into capital invested in development projects that would revive the production process and generate employment opportunities, which would, in turn, reduce, if not eliminate, the flow of emigration to developed countries. It would be appropriate, in this respect, to provide special support to those States that have taken fundamental steps towards democracy.

Thirdly, it is somewhat regrettable that development assistance given by donor countries is not proportionate with their gross domestic product. This runs counter to good judgement and logic.

Fourthly and lastly, we believe that it is in the interest of developed countries to be mindful of the great damage that will befall them by reason of their economic policies vis-à-vis the developing countries. We shall briefly refer, in this respect, to three indicators.

The first indicator relates to the developing countries that produce and export raw materials. Industrialized developed countries are indifferent to the high prices of their own products, while they raise objecting voices when the prices of raw materials, such as petroleum, rise in international markets, although such an increase is the result of high taxes imposed by those developed countries. The second indicator relates to the industrial countries resorting to various excuses with the aim of weakening the competitive power of some developing countries. The third indicator relates to the increasing restrictions that those developed countries and their giant corporations impose on the exploitation of the great advances that have been made in the various spheres of human knowledge and technology development, under the pretext of protecting intellectual property.

We endorse the constructive proposals submitted by the Secretary-General in his report concerning the elimination of armed conflicts in the world and the role of the United Nations in this respect. We would emphasize the particular importance of three issues.

First, the United Nations should be urged to enhance its role in bringing the Arab-Israeli conflict to an end. We welcome any other efforts that could be made outside the United Nations in this regard, provided that they pay due respect to the rights of the Palestinian and Syrian peoples established by international resolutions. In the same context, we believe that the issue of Holy Jerusalem should be accorded the extreme priority that it deserves, by reason of its distinct place in the hearts and minds of Arabs and Muslims, and since it is the cornerstone of any prospective peace in the Middle East.

The second issue is the necessity of moving quickly towards making the Middle East a nuclear-weapon-free zone. From this forum, we call on Israel to accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

The third issue relates to the necessity of putting checks on the way international sanctions are imposed. These checks should establish a time-frame so that these sanctions will not continue forever.

As we look forward to contributing to the improvement of the performance of the United Nations, we feel that the only way to realize this goal is to extend democratic practices and equal opportunities within the various international organizations. It is also

high time to expand the membership of the Security Council so as to include, fairly and equitably, all regions of the world. The Arab world should have a permanent seat in the Council because of its importance.

At this time, on the threshold of the third millennium, we look forward to a peaceful and safe world, a world in which justice, security and prosperity reign free of division, war and misery while moving smoothly towards change, development and betterment that will contribute to the progress of all humanity.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Aleksander Kwasniewski, President of the Republic of Poland.

President Kwasniewski: In history, an end also marks a beginning. Now, at the turn of the centuries, we have a strong sense that this is happening. History has quickened its pace, and the new face of the world is emerging before our eyes.

Many may find the balance of the passing century depressing: two world wars and hundreds of local ones; two ominous totalitarian systems; achievements of science drawn in work of destruction; famine; surges of egoism among nations and groups which crushed individuals. Yet, the twentieth century has also had its brighter pages. Owing to the progress of technology, mankind has been equipped with new medicines, new sources of energy and new means of communication. International cooperation has flourished. The world has learned to appreciate both its own multi-dimensional character and the multiplicity of cultures. Freedom, democracy, rule of law, tolerance, as never before in history, have built a common house for millions of people.

I am proud to represent a country which has made a substantial contribution to this positive transformation. Twenty years ago, the phenomenon of Polish "Solidarity" gave rise to a surge which eventually melted the ice of the cold war. In 1989, in the wake of the Round Table Talks, at an historic meeting of Government and "Solidarity"-led opposition, the Poles showed how the will to negotiate and agreement above divisions could bring about an historic breakthrough. Democracy, reforms, reconciliation and development have become part and parcel of Poland's everyday life. Ultimately, the whole of our region of Central Europe emerged as a force of stability, security, development and progress.

Aware of its assets and proportionate to its potential, Poland participates — and intends to be even more actively involved — in the construction of the new global order. This has been evidenced, inter alia, by the participation of thousands of Polish soldiers and observers in United Nations peacekeeping missions, by the efforts during our chairmanship of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), as well as by the Warsaw Declaration, adopted last June, when, together with other democratic countries, we reiterated our determination to cooperate on the basis of fundamental values of democracy and human rights.

Let us ask ourselves, let us honestly consider: Have we really been able to develop and apply procedures and instruments to effectively protect human rights? Have we yet found a way to overcome divisions between the impoverished South and the prospering North? Are we able to protect the natural environment? Do we know how to ensure that the era of inexorable progress of information and communications really favours development of culture and education, and that it will not transform into an era of information chaos? In the face of the market *diktat*, do we not lose sight of the human person in his or her full dimension, including his or her spiritual values?

The term "globalization" has been coined for our new interdependence. I represent a country which has opened itself to the world, emerging as an even more active participant in trade, scientific and technological exchanges. We, in Poland, feel at ease in a world of cultural interaction and lively contacts between people.

We should remember, however, that there is also a dark side to globalization. The disparity between poor and rich countries continues to grow. I am convinced that we can succeed in this endeavour only if we accept that world development must be based on universal values. In this respect, the principle of solidarity will have an important role to play.

Solidarity is shared responsibility. It is sensitivity to the needs and fears of the weaker. It is willingness to cooperate and to offer support. It is priority of concerted efforts over unilateral action. It is respect for diversity and dialogue. But, above all, I perceive solidarity as freedom, dignity and welfare of the individual which are brought into the focus of attention of all political action and global campaigns. What the

world needs today is a synthesis of the strengths, which the free market has undoubtedly demonstrated, combined with realistic and people-oriented solutions which have to be introduced into political practice.

The threshold of the twenty-first century poses a formidable challenge to the United Nations. The world has changed; the concept of international order is transforming. Hence the imperative need to reform our Organization in order to enable it to face great global challenges and, at the same time, to protect the rights of every person. Within the United Nations, we need efficient organs, a flexible programme, and effective use of resources. Our role — as Heads of State or Government — should be to provide clear guidelines, political support and adequate resources for the Organization.

We need our world Organization more than ever before. We must face up to the inevitable: changing lifestyles, changing ways of communication and of satisfying needs. In this new, ever changing world, the United Nations should offer us a sense of stability and predictability. I am deeply convinced that the United Nations is able to serve mankind in such a way, facing the challenges to come in this new twenty-first century.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Maldas Adamkus, President of the Republic of Lithuania.

President Adamkus: A number of speakers at this historic event have already made numerous concrete and valuable proposals on ways to adapt the United Nations to the challenges of the twenty-first century. I hope that the final document of the Summit will enhance this process by setting concrete objectives for the Organization.

We cannot expect that the process involving the renewal of the United Nations and the increasing role of the Organization will proceed on an easy and fast track. There might be a great deal of disappointment. The most important thing, however, is that the process be continuous.

The United Nations cannot solve all of the problems and meet all of the challenges. The success of our efforts to re-adapt ourselves to new realities will depend primarily on the involvement of States and the regions. The Member States should also play an active role in finding ways of addressing the needs of today.

The United Nations will enhance its influence when some Member States assume a greater share of responsibility by making an increased contribution to the Organization. On behalf of Lithuania, I would like to announce that my country is increasing its contribution to United Nations peacekeeping operations.

The development of our region demonstrates that the progress made by countries depends directly on the extent of the efforts made to achieve it. Our own experience during the 10 years of our independence has shown that a liberal democracy, a market economy, an open society and respect for human rights are the basic preconditions necessary for achieving progress in a short period of time. Only a very few countries, for example those with extensive natural resources, might ignore these principles, but, as history shows, not for long.

I believe that in the face of a globalized tomorrow, the United Nations will increase the scope of its human-dimension activities. Human rights should become a cornerstone of the emerging world structure. The United Nations should advance in the search for new and more effective instruments to fend off the challengers of human rights.

Globalization will continue to bring into question the limits of human rights applicability. My region is particularly interested in how the international community can promote the rights of people coping with a post-communist transition.

Ten years of profound transformation have endowed Central and Eastern European nations with invaluable experience. Good-neighbourly relations have become an earmark of the region. For instance, despite the serious disagreements that have existed in the past, the strategic partnership that has evolved between Lithuania and its neighbour Poland is a remarkable example.

The cases of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe have shown that integration works to the benefit of all participating countries and of their neighbours. Lithuania is working, and will continue to work, in the same direction with respect to the part it is playing in Euro-Atlantic enlargement.

Yet Central and Eastern Europe have to resolve numerous issues, which I will call "divorce legacies". In the process of the disintegration of one dominant

power and one ideology, thousands, if not millions, of people are waiting to be compensated for lost lives, health or property. They are looking for justice, which is perceived as a compensation for their losses in the past. The United Nations could play a more important role in addressing the expectations of such people.

A number of speakers in this forum have underlined the importance of the principle of equality among nations. This is an essential principle of international relations. The leading nations in this multipolar environment, however, should also expand their role and take on more responsibilities. The right leadership can help to find a way out of a deadlocked situation. In this light, we note the progress made in the reform of the Security Council.

The United Nations has a commendable record of reconciling the differences that stem from our different backgrounds. The year 2001 has been proclaimed the United Nations Year of Dialogue among Civilizations. It is a great honour for Lithuania to host, next April, the International Conference on Dialogue among Civilizations, which Mr. Koichiro Matsuura, Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), has kindly agreed to co-chair.

Over the last decades, the concept of civilization has outgrown its traditional cultural limits and today also involves social and economic values. The global community is being realigned according to this new blueprint. But the challenge is greater than that. The cultural richness that history has bestowed upon us must go hand in hand with the progress that globalization promotes. We must build a dialogue in a language acceptable to many. That language, I believe, should be based on the principles enshrined in key United Nations instruments, primarily the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This is the real challenge that we face now.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by Her Excellency Ms. Tarja Halonen, President of the Republic of Finland.

President Halonen: The United Nations needs to be more relevant to its Member States, but especially to their peoples. It is important that all individuals sense the relevance of the United Nations and support its mission.

The United Nations has done, and needs to continue to do, good work for those most in need — women, children, minorities and the disabled. The United Nations global conferences have addressed many human needs and individuals' everyday concerns, and we will continue in conferences on racism, AIDS, and the situation of children. I would emphasize that "We the peoples" is the central element of the United Nations Charter.

The United Nations must be essential also in the maintenance of international peace and security. Here I speak about a comprehensive concept of security. Peace is not only the absence of war. Democracy, respect for human rights, the rule of law and good governance are essential for comprehensive security and development. They are also effective means of crisis prevention.

Civilian crisis management should be developed and strengthened. A competent judiciary, a well-functioning educational system and effective local administration are everyday examples. Using the same elements, post-conflict peace-building consolidates a nation's foundation and prevents the renewal of conflicts. But we still need traditional peacekeeping, and therefore we should urgently consider the recommendations of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations.

As much as we must protect people from fear, we must protect them from want. We need to make them feel secure and respected. Human-centred sustainable development is the best means of long-term crisis prevention. It addresses the structural causes of conflict and thus builds a solid foundation for lasting peace. Elimination of poverty, respect for human rights and gender equality are crucial elements in this respect. I am convinced that there is no peace without sustainable development and no development without lasting peace. They go hand in hand in all parts of the world.

As a Co-Chairperson of this Summit, I have noticed that everybody is speaking about globalization — and rightly so, because it is one of our major challenges. The United Nations must make a serious effort to ensure that all countries and all people can enjoy the fruits of globalization.

Another challenge to the United Nations is how to use the revolution in information and communication technology to advance development. At the same time, the United Nations must continue its

work to improve basic education. We know that to be able to read and write is still just a dream for millions of our fellow-citizens. Concerning information and communication technology, the United Nations must establish partnerships, including partnerships with the private sector. To the developing countries, this revolution offers a chance to make leaps in development. Closing the digital divide would help narrow the gap between developed and developing countries and would help make them more equal partners in world affairs. Nevertheless, there is no magic formula for development. New and old remedies must complement one another. Increased assistance must focus on individuals and their needs. We must forgive the debts of the poorest countries and remove obstacles from their trade.

The participation of civil society is very important in terms of the relevance of the United Nations. Its input is needed in all United Nations activities. Non-governmental organizations have played a crucial role in setting the global agenda. This participation must be extended to civil society as a whole, including parliaments, the private sector and the business community. Their representatives could be included, for instance, in official United Nations delegations, as they are in Finland's. Wide international cooperation among all actors brings the United Nations closer to "we the peoples". I commend the Secretary-General for his initiatives on including civil society. Strengthening the United Nations requires new approaches to support. In his report entitled "We the peoples" (A/54/2000), the Secretary-General presents an excellent blueprint for the United Nations.

Faced with multifaceted tasks the United Nations needs a strong commitment to multilateralism from all its Members.

We know the facts. We know what we want. We know how to get it. All we need is the will to do it.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): Before I give the floor to the next speaker, I should like to draw the attention of members to a matter concerning the maintenance of order in the General Assembly Hall. There have been many instances of cellular telephones ringing in the General Assembly Hall while a meeting was in progress. The ringing of cellular phones interferes with the delivery of statements and disrupts the orderly proceeding of the meetings. In that regard, I urge members of delegations to turn their cellular phones off or to keep them in silent mode while in the General Assembly Hall. I thank members for their cooperation.

The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Alpha Oumar Konaré, President of the Republic of Mali.

President Konaré (*spoke in French*): A special session of the General Assembly devoted to children will be convened in September 2001, and I wish to begin my statement with this loving cry from the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF): children come first; children are our future. We look forward to a future without child soldiers and child victims of armed conflict; without trafficking in children to exploit and enslave them; without violence and cruelty to children; without the exploitation of child labour. The future is for children, for children who are better educated and better cared for.

And for the people of Mali, that future must not be made in the image of the present, a present of great poverty in material terms. This situation is not a matter of fate. It is the result of insufficient payment for our products; of the crushing debt burden; of our growing oil bills; of the lack of investment; and perhaps also of the poor management of our economies and of poor economic choices — but of inappropriate cooperation policies as well.

There are solutions that can change this situation, that can bring about increased income, faster and more sustained growth and the conditions for sustainable human development. The war on poverty should take account of the specific characteristics of each country and should show respect for the disadvantaged and for the thousands of men and women, organizations and institutions that have always been waging that war.

We have to free up initiatives, especially private initiatives and those of civil society and non-governmental organizations, to consolidate local human resources and national capacities, to increase official development assistance, and to consider a more collective management of hydrocarbons in the spirit of the San José Agreement. We must also make greater use of the technological revolution and new information technologies.

In that connection we should pay special attention to the World Summit on Information Society to be convened in 2003 by the International

Telecommunication Union with the participation of all parties concerned.

We need a climate of freedom and the rule of law in order to create a context conducive to good governance, to the fight against corruption and to participation by populations in all their diversity, especially cultural diversity, in the management of their affairs and in the free choice of their representatives.

We must have a clear, unambiguous common position that condemns brutal disruption of the democratic process. Military coups cannot be condemned in Africa accepted elsewhere. We have to prevent by all means genocide and flagrant violations of human rights.

We must also consider isolating regimes at war that refuse mediation efforts by the international community. We have to fight for greater human security by condemning the use of anti-personnel landmines and the secret nuclear arms race; by fighting against the proliferation of and illicit trafficking in light weapons; and by supporting the work of national, regional and international coalitions which include all of the actors concerned, including Governments and civil societies.

We have to condemn the physical mutilation of human beings, rejecting any self-proclaimed, so-called national amnesty following killings, and rejecting the culture of impunity.

Strengthening the culture of peace and human rights education will be the pillar of democratic progress and will support the emergence of a truly diverse community of democracies that are based on universal principles and far from holding to one single ideology. In this regard, we welcome the creation in Warsaw last June of the Community of Democracies, which will favour the expansion of democratic principles throughout the world.

Democratic progress in Africa feeds the momentum of regional and subregional integration. It has led to the creation of the African Union, which will enable our continent to be more responsible, to propose its own true alternatives to its problems and to assert its presence among all the international organizations. The African Union will create the conditions for a true partnership for irreversible globalization — globalization that is not simply an economic process and is not synonymous with exclusion, with just the logic of the market or with an unbridled quest for profit and wealth. Globalization will be synonymous with sharing, with opening up to products from the South and with social justice. It must have a human face, or it will not be for us.

Despite its negative media image of being a continent of wars and of violence that often springs from a lack of democracy, of being a continent of calamities and disasters, Africa remains a continent with formidable assets, a continent that looks to the future with confidence. Today we intend to take up the duty of our generation in the struggle against poverty and disease, in mounting an unprecedented crusade against AIDS in a spirit of solidarity, even overcoming taboos, because we will not let ourselves die. Out of every ten people who have AIDS, nine are in Africa.

We also want to take up the duty of our generation to fight ignorance. Education, especially of young people and women, is our top priority. It must enlighten the new millennium and inaugurate the new century. We also want to fight environmental degradation and to preserve our common land.

The duty of a generation demands the solidarity of a generation. None of those objectives will be achieved without a greater democratization of the United Nations, through the expansion of the Security Council, so that it becomes more effective and legitimate and better represents the States and peoples of the world. The desired reform should also include the effective exercise by the General Assembly, as the supreme world forum, of all its prerogatives, and the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council so that it can play the role entrusted to it by the Charter.

None of this can be achieved if, at the dawn of this new, twenty-first century and of this new, third millennium, individuals and peoples are not placed at the heart of our concerns. As the Secretary-General has eloquently pointed out, we need to undertake a true dialogue of civilizations — a dialogue based on solidarity, the law, tolerance and remembering; a dialogue that never forgets slavery, colonialism, fascism, xenophobia, racism, the fate of Palestine.

Glory to man, and may the United Nations live in a world of peace, solidarity, sharing and social justice. Please God that this Millennium Assembly will be a decisive step forward.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Frederick J. T. Chiluba, President of the Republic of Zambia.

President Chiluba (Zambia): We have come to New York not only to celebrate, but, most important, to reflect on our achievements in the last millennium and to ponder our future. This occasion gives us the opportunity to redefine the working mechanisms of a United Nations which should be people-centred.

It is regrettable that, so many years after the establishment of this body, global peace is still far from being achieved, while the war on want is in dire jeopardy, as the vast majority of the world's population continues to live in abject poverty. Poverty is not an accident, but a result of inequitable economic and political interaction in which the weak continue to be deprived of resources necessary for development. It is totally unacceptable that — in this day and age of modern technology and the information superhighway — squalor, misery and disease continue to ravage millions of our people, especially women and children, who bear the brunt of poverty.

It is imperative for the international community to search its moral conscience and focus on this serious blemish. Measures to address this situation are clear. They include improved market access, deep and broader debt relief, foreign direct investment and other capital inflows, and financial and technical support in the multilateral trading system. The launch of the enhanced Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Debt Initiative by the G-8 countries has had little impact on debt and poverty. Eligibility for and access to the HIPC initiative must be more open in order to benefit many more countries that are in desperate need of support. Development partners that have not done so should strengthen their efforts to honour the longstanding undertaking to allocate 0.15 per cent of their gross national product as overseas development assistance to least developed countries, and more donors should move towards the 0.2 per cent target.

The impact of aid has been limited not only by its declining volume, but also by the lack of concrete action to address the issues of concern to developing countries. The world shares a common humanity, whose essence must go beyond mere rhetoric to concrete action to eliminate the obvious imbalances that continue to exacerbate poverty and marginalization. The United Nations must as a matter of urgency give poverty eradication the priority it deserves. We must develop clear, action-oriented programmes to combat this scourge, which claims more victims than wars. It is futile to claim a common global humanity while perpetuating structures of injustice and inequality.

Given political will and determination, poverty can be eliminated from the face of the world. The solutions to this crisis in large measure depend on the restructuring of the United Nations itself. In its present form the United Nations lacks the capacity to respond adequately to these problems. It is for this reason that my Government is calling for recognition of the need to energize and refocus the Organization as a matter of urgency, to enable it respond to these challenges. The United Nations should be made more viable in order to support transparency and good governance, improve human rights, preserve the environment, consolidate democracy and improve the standards of living of our people. It must be given the capacity to deal with the serious conditions and circumstances that continue to afflict the globe.

It is a contradiction in terms that while we have been championing democratization across the globe, we have not been able to democratize the Security Council.

As we commemorate the millennium, we should give hope to the war-afflicted peoples in many regions of the world by finding lasting solutions to the causes of conflicts.

Africa has been hardest hit by these conflicts. We, the members of this family of nations, must speed up our reaction to such crises. Our slow response has on many occasions proved very costly, leading to the loss of many lives.

We in Africa have recognized that military and other unconstitutional upheavals are the major causes of political instability. As a result, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) has adopted the "red card" principle, meaning that any OAU member State whose Government comes into power by unconstitutional means will immediately be suspended from the Organization until that Government restores democratic rule. The United Nations, in my opinion, needs to adopt a similar declaration to eliminate the unconstitutional removal of elected Governments.

My Government hopes that the unity of purpose expressed at this Summit will provide a historic opportunity to all of us to agree on a process for a fundamental review of the role of, and challenges facing, the United Nations.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Stjepan Mesić, President of the Republic of Croatia.

President Mesić (*spoke in Croatian*) (*English text provided by the delegation*): Time is running short. The moments in which we all intuitively feel that humankind is at a crucial crossroads are rare indeed. One such moment is now.

The twentieth century was a period of immense progress of science and technology. Man has soared into the air, stepped on the Moon and reached for the stars. Man has plunged into the depths of the sea and has begun to exploit the submarine world. He has linked and shrunk the world by information and communication technologies. At the same time, he has gained better knowledge, if not awareness, of himself. The causes of many diseases and the drugs for their treatment have been discovered, and the human genome has been mapped.

On the other hand, the twentieth century was marked by two world wars, two authoritarian systems with global ambitions, the cold war, the global arms race and the bipolar world. But, although a new global conflict has been avoided, confrontations have nevertheless remained.

In such a world — and I am confident that we all share this awareness — we must provide full support to this global Organization, the United Nations, and endeavour to make it, through common efforts, the most relevant and efficient factor in the present-day world, an Organization which every nation will truly experience as its own. I have in mind a regenerated and, in every respect, revitalized United Nations, capable of responding to the challenges of the new century and providing the much needed framework for efforts focused on strengthening security and on the achievement of progress and prosperity for all.

I believe that this eminent gathering is the opportunity to welcome the major contribution of the United Nations and, in particular, of the current Secretary-General, Kofi Annan. We firmly support his vision of a world befitting man and his fight against evil, a vision which has systematically inspired him throughout his rich career and which is also the point of departure of his proposal and call for a thorough reform of the United Nations structure and activity, including the reform of the Security Council and the peacekeeping operation system, and recognition of the role of the General Assembly.

It is with a sense of pride that I address the Assembly today on behalf of the Republic of Croatia, a small European country which has experienced war and is now affected by the many ills of a country undergoing transition. We need, urge and count on the assistance of the international community in overcoming the consequences of the war and strengthening the institutions of civil society and democracy. Croatia now seeks and is beginning to achieve its link-up with the Euro-Atlantic integrations and the European Union. Firmly committed to such foreign policy goals, we also expect their equally firm and encouraging support in this endeavour. We are still faced with the challenges of issues such as Prevlaka and the succession to the former Yugoslavia, which ought to be dealt with in accordance with the principle of the inviolability of internationally recognized borders, international law and equality.

Today I urge Members again to pool our efforts and actions, lest we should disappoint the millions of those who in the twentieth century gave their lives for a better tomorrow, as well as those who will spend the greater part of their lives in the twenty-first century. Let us help the young in the poor countries, as well as in the rich countries, to overcome the frustration with which they are currently faced, although for different reasons. Time is running short; let us set off before it is too late.

The path ahead is clear. Let us follow the signpost offered us by the Secretary-General in his report; let us breathe life into it. Let us start from the point of departure. Let us secure the recognition of the values of freedom, equality and the fundamental rights of States, peoples and, primarily, individuals. Let us secure the recognition of principles, and strengthen the instruments and standards of the fight against discrimination, intolerance, supremacy and dependence of any kind.

Let us harness our forces and endure in our efforts to curb the arms race, which is wasteful and

lethal in every respect. Let us conclude new treaties and reinforce our support for existing treaties covering this field, particularly with regard to mine control and the control of small-bore weapons production and trade.

Let us espouse the positive achievements and promises of globalization, and attenuate its negative implications by favouring economic relations which will provide for the gradual emergence of poor countries from their dire predicaments. Let us reform the international financial institutions, but let us not, in the process, neglect or unilaterally avoid the discipline and commitments imposed by global interdependence.

Let us fight for the preservation of our rivers, mountains, seas and oceans, our common heritage on this planet. Let us commit ourselves to compliance with the undertakings we have assumed, because we thereby also preserve the basis of our own existence.

In conclusion, let me call on the Assembly to confirm our dedication to peace and to the protection of all rights of every human being, because relations of genuine equality on this global scale can only be established on such a foundation. Human life is the supreme value, and this is why we have the right and the obligation to stand up in its protection, wherever and by whomever it may be jeopardized, through our common global Organization.

The key to the future is in our hands. The future will be of our own doing. Let us boldly open the door of the new century and the new millennium. Let us do it together, here and now, for the world is at a turning point and time is running short.

Let me take this opportunity to thank all those who have expressed their sympathy over the tragic death of a Croatian citizen, Pero Simundza, who was killed in West Timor in the service of the United Nations.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Leonid Kuchma, President of Ukraine.

President Kuchma *(spoke in Ukrainian)*: Speaking from this high rostrum, I feel probably the same as everybody present here — responsibility, solidarity and inspiration. Our participation in the Summit reaffirms our commitment to and support for the foundations of world order, based on the underlying principles of the Charter of the United Nations. These principles should continue to serve as the basis for the system of international relations in the next millennium.

In historic terms, the United Nations was brought into existence not so long ago. Even less time has elapsed since the creation of the newly independent States, including Ukraine. But even within this short period of time we have learned a lot. We know what the peoples of our countries want.

Like every people on earth, my compatriots want to live in a democratic country, without fear for their future and the life and destiny of coming generations. It has been from this angle that we perceive the role and place of the United Nations in the twenty-first century.

Disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons remain one of the essential tasks to be addressed by the United Nations and the world community. Not so long ago, Ukraine took an unprecedented step by renouncing the world's third largest nuclear arsenal. That gesture of goodwill, dictated by the responsibility for strengthening peace and for the future of mankind, gives us the right to call upon other States to follow this way.

I am convinced that nuclear weapons are useless and unpromising as an instrument of State policy. It is necessary to do everything possible to make sure that in the new millennium mankind gets rid once and for all of the fear of devastating nuclear disaster. In this respect, we support the idea of convening a worldwide international conference to work out ways and means of eliminating such a threat.

The United Nations should continue to play a key role in maintaining the international peace and security. It is quite obvious that such hazardous diseases as conflicts should be treated long before their eruption. I believe that today, as never before, there is an acute need to develop a comprehensive strategy of the United Nations for conflict prevention that should be based on a large-scale use of preventive diplomacy and peace-building.

It is on this premise that a peacekeeping philosophy of the United Nations and its Member States in the next millennium should be built. A secure and equitable world would be difficult to achieve without resolute and uncompromising response by the entire world community to new challenges related to the process of globalization. It seems that possible

catastrophic consequences of some of them have not yet been fully realized.

Completely sharing the views expressed by previous speakers regarding the threat of international terrorism, I would like to draw particular attention to one of its specific manifestations, international computer terrorism. Unfortunately, criminals and malefactors have been increasingly enjoying the advantages of the information revolution. I would like to invite you to consider the appropriateness of working out an international instrument to combat computer terrorism.

The best and most reliable weapon of peace is steady economic development. For developing countries and countries with economies in transition, the main factors for success in economic reforms and poverty eradication programmes consist in obtaining free access to world markets, in liberalizing trade and resolving external debt problems. It is in this domain that both the United Nations and the international financial institutions can launch their initiatives.

Ensuring proper living conditions for future generations from the environmental standpoint is another urgent task that requires our joint and concerted efforts. In Ukraine, there is a clear understanding of the danger caused by the careless exploitation of natural resources and the use of new technologies.

Our people have been suffering the consequences of the largest technological cataclysm of the twentieth century, the Chernobyl nuclear power plant accident. We have made a decision to shut down this nuclear power plant by December 15th, 2000. This decision gives us an opportunity to work out a mechanism for consolidating efforts at all levels — national, regional and international — to resolve social, economic and environmental problems that affect the peace and security of individual countries and of all the humankind.

Time requires of all of us to act in unity with resolve and to assume the responsibility for the future of the United Nations. In the twenty-first century, the Organization should be provided with such capabilities, financial resources and structures that will allow us effectively to serve those on behalf of whom and for whom it was established.

I am convinced that by strengthening the United Nations the world community could significantly enhance its capacity to withstand the dangers and threats, to respond to the challenges of our time and to ensure stability, justice and predictability of international relations.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency, Retired Flight-Lieutenant, Jerry John Rawlings, President of the Republic of Ghana.

President Rawlings: The end of one millennium and the beginning of another marks a focal point for the hopes and expectations of peoples across the world. While there were great social and scientific achievements during the past century, we also have to admit that deprivation and inequality continue to grow.

The report of the Secretary-General to this Summit captures the challenges and the means to address them very comprehensively. We support the thrust of the report, and we call for international commitment to urgent action. In today's globalized world, we must not only ensure social justice internally, but we must also incorporate it in own our global interactions.

The failure in the past to recognize and apply the principles of equity and justice in international relations has determined the present unacceptable conditions of poverty, marginalization, criminality, the spread of disease, environmental degradation and global social disorder. Using the economic and technological edge of our millennium and converging ethical world-views, I believe as most of us do, that we can reverse these conditions and pursue the objectives of socially stable global societies, emphasizing trade, debt reduction or debt alleviation and the containment of the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

Education, particularly access to good quality basic education, provides the basis for the building of tolerant, socially stable communities. We must therefore mobilize the $7 billion a year needed to meet the educational costs of providing primary education over the next 10 years for the 130 million children in developing countries who do not now have access to it. Our efforts to strengthen education must necessarily include the education and empowerment of women, with emphasis on the girl child.

As a leading contributor to United Nations and regional peacekeeping, Ghana believes that regional or subregional efforts to contain conflict can only augment United Nations efforts to maintain international peace and security. This is best assured if structural weaknesses within United Nations peacekeeping operations are addressed.

If developing countries are to ensure for their peoples the decent quality of life which flows from a stable, developed environment, their capacity to govern responsibly needs to be reinforced, particularly through increased development assistance. The absence of strong and resilient institutions in regions like Africa has encouraged corruption from within and without.

I should like to speak for a few more minutes on the issue of corruption. Corruption is a global phenomenon. However, Africa, in particular, has suffered especially severe damage — materially, socially, politically and morally. Seemingly, it is the only, or the most, corrupt continent in the world. Admittedly, Africa may have had — it probably still has — a few notably corrupt and tyrannical leaders and Governments. It may also be true that our continent is not yet free from this blight, which has drained some of our countries of resources, both material and human, which should have been used to improve the quality of life of the poor and the disadvantaged. Developing countries have to check corruption, but we are also entitled to demand that the developed world does not thrust corruption upon us.

Where do the proceeds of this corruption end up in the long run? They end up in the vaults of the financial and banking institutions of the Western world. For every dollar of corrupt money that is kept in Western banks, one African child may die, two African children starve and three African children suffer from disease and ignorance resulting from lack of health care or of education. There will be less corruption in Africa if there is no place to hide the proceeds of corruption or if the proceeds of corruption — once uncovered, as has been done — are returned to their real owners, the people of Africa, being served by Governments of integrity.

Companies and multinationals that are apparently reputable are known to engage in underhand deals with high-level officials in order to gain advantages over their competitors or to carry out unethical operations. Recently one Western company so seriously undermined a rival company from the same country in a bid for an important water project in my country, by falsely impugning its business ethics, that the latter company, which had offered much better terms, pulled out of the bid. Its withdrawal from the bidding process does not only represent a loss of integrity; it is Ghana's loss, as the water project still remains on the drawing board today. Some of my people will continue to drink unhealthy water, if they drink any at all.

In another case of competition between Western countries in Europe and in the Americas — countries on both sides of the Atlantic ocean that believe in democracy and pontificate on the subject, and on the free market system and competition — questionable arguments based on technical rules of origin, supported by false declarations by officials sent to my country by one of them in Europe, were employed in order to deny European market access to a Ghanaian value-added product, just because it was perceived to be an appendage of an American company. This is a very sad extension of the Western countries' own trade wars. Once again, we in the so-called condemned world are the ones who suffer.

A World Bank report recently blacklisted 29 companies for corruption in contract-awarding procedures in an African country. Which country? Our sister country, Nigeria. The overwhelming majority — more than 80 per cent — of the corrupt companies blacklisted by the World Bank, which is a Western institution, incidentally, were not Nigerian companies, but were from the very Western world that condemns us for our corruption.

That was bad enough. But even worse is the corruption of the domestic front men of such companies, whose corrupt moneys continue to be retained in Western banking and financial institutions and about whom there is a dead, stony silence. Politicians run the risk of being shot in a coup or a revolt, or of dying for their alleged corruption. Yet, whenever the money is uncovered, I can assure the Assembly that for every one politician or leader, there could be five corrupt African business collaborators whose corrupt moneys remain untouched in Western banks. Yet, as usual, it is the politicians who always face the risks.

Only last week, in an unprecedented diplomatic faux pas, a high-ranking Western diplomat in my country openly declared at a public forum that leading

Western companies, including companies from his own country, offer bribes to Government officials in order to influence the award of contracts. In other words, Western Governments know about the corruption of their countries' companies operating in my continent of Africa, yet keep dead quiet about it. This is not good enough.

Questionable and dubious mergers and acquisitions are putting enterprises in Africa and the developing world, and even in the developed world itself, out of business.

I am convinced that Africa's political independence will remain meaningless unless it is reflected in a transparent Africa, a corruption-free Africa, an accountable Africa and a trusted Africa. But the temptations of the developed world must stop, if this vision is to be achieved.

Finally, the ongoing reform of our Organization must aim at achieving a world body that is development-oriented and representative, and take into account that that representation should not leave out responsibilities at the Security Council level. It also must become democratic and responsive. Making and using the United Nations as a real forum of the people, responsive to the global challenges of our time, will be our challenge as we embark on a new millennium.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Hugo Chávez Frías, President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

President Chávez Frías (*spoke in Spanish*): Venezuela and its Bolivarian people salute this Millennium Summit and, through it, all the peoples and countries of the world.

Two millenniums ago, Jesus Christ came to fight for justice, for peace, for dignity and for life. He died crucified. Five hundred years ago, the encounter and the conflict between civilizations were accelerated through a savage process of conquest, colonization, exploitation and domination. Fifty-five years ago, the United Nations was created in order to fight for security, equality and the happiness of peoples.

Since Jesus' last supper so long ago in the year 33, up to this Millennium Summit of 2000, how many summits have men held! It sometimes seems that we jump from summit to summit while our peoples keep moaning from abyss to abyss. Despite fighters such as Christ, the good intentions of colonizers such as Father de las Casas and the good will of many in the United Nations during the past half-century, today's world remains marked and burdened by misery, inequality, hunger and death.

Simón Bolívar, the liberator of South America and the leader who inspired the revolution that is taking place today in Venezuela, dreamed one day, in his vision for justice, dreamed about scaling the Chimborazo summit. There, over the perpetual snows of the spine of the Andes, he imagined that he met Father Time, a wise, long-bearded old man. Following a dialogue on that peak, Father Time told him: "Go and tell the truth to man".

Today, I have come here as the standard-bearer of that Bolivarian dream to proclaim to the United Nations and the world: Let us tell the truth to man. Let us give meaning to the word "truth". We have two interpretations that are commonly accepted by many philosophical schools to define truth. The first holds that truth is not an abstraction or a dream. The truth is something that is happening at this very moment to every one of us and to all of our people. The second holds that truth is the only thing that links us to the whole, to all humankind. The Indian philosopher Jiddu Krishnamurti said that the truth is not static, a fixed point. The truth moves; it is a dynamic that goes many ways.

Of course, the United Nations was created in a historic moment. We were emerging from the horror of the Second World War and, under the looming threat of conflict, humankind rallied around that truth in order to put an end to that infernal human butchery in which millions died. But this truth has been left behind. It is no longer the truth today and has disappeared with time. The time has come at this Millennium Summit to make that truth a creative hope, a colossal challenge. Let us leave it behind. We cannot keep clinging stubbornly to a truth that is no longer true, that was valid at only one moment of history.

Of course, in the world today, millions of people continue to die every day, but not as a result of bombs or world wars. The truth is different today. Millions are dying today as a result of hunger, inequality, exploitation and poverty. Death is triumphant throughout the planet even as we meet here. That is why Venezuela adds it voice to the clamour of the wretched of the Earth, as Frantz Fanon would say, to

call for a structural transformation of the United Nations, a radical change of the Organization.

We must democratize and expand the Security Council so that we can find the truth for all. The truth cannot be imposed by a minority, because then it would not be the truth. We would be living a lie of imposition and inequality. Venezuela joins that cry. Only in this way, can we the people begin to emerge from this abyss and scale the heights. A new world compact of the United Nations is necessary. We need a new democratic consensus in the United Nations. Venezuela joins that cry.

We must build on this new reality and on the new moment in which we are living. Only in this way can we hear the voices of the silent. I could have dispensed with these five minutes this morning and spared representatives the time of listening to me. I might have taken only three seconds. Why do I say three seconds? Because, according to statistics, every three seconds a child dies of hunger in this world. One, two, three: that is our truth.

It is said in the Bible that those who have eyes must see and those who have ears must hear. Let me say that those who have a heart should listen to the cries of the wretched of the Earth. Only in this way can we comply with the dictum laid down in the Book of Ecclesiastes: "For everything there is an appointed time, ...and an appropriate time for every matter on Earth." (*The Holy Bible, Ecclesiastes, 3:1*)

On this planet, let us build our new truth and act so that we may say that the time of the people has come. This is the call of Venezuela, on behalf of the Bolivarian peoples and of humanity: let us save the world!

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Heydar Aliyev, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

President Aliyev *(spoke in Russian)*: The twentieth century is coming to an end. Humankind will recall this century with its spiritual and intellectual progress, two bloody world wars, the collapse of empires and the emergence of dozens of new sovereign States, the tensions of the cold war and the collective efforts towards peace and stability. What will the world look like in the coming century? The relegation of the confrontation of two systems to the pages of history and the prevalent expansion of ideas of democracy and market economy should contribute to building the kind of world where the interests of all States are taken into account and a genuine equal partnership is established.

However, an analysis of the development of the international environment leads us to the bitter conclusion that stereotypes of rivalry are still alive. We are living through a very uneasy period, where a single wrong step could create an explosion of a situation and lead to a tragic return to the past. We face the challenge of treading a difficult path towards building a just and secure world order, and we all need to strive to achieve that goal.

The main trend at the present stage of the world's development is globalization. We are all concerned about the prospects of this complex and ambiguous phenomenon. Globalization should contribute to ensuring sustainable development, integrity and a stability of systems for governing nations, to overcome discrimination in economic relations and to improve the welfare of peoples.

The supremacy of the principles and norms of international law, the evolutionary character of change, partnership and support by the more advanced nations to less developed States, mutual trust and recognition of national distinctions in light of the commitment to values cherished by all humanity should be the determining vectors of this process. The strength of democratic development is in its diversity.

Azerbaijan is making its contribution to the positive development of globalization. Using its geographic location, resources and potential, which are of geo-strategic importance to the whole world, my country has been effectively playing the role as a bridge between East and West, originating from a rich historical past and aimed towards the future. We are making enormous efforts to restore the Great Silk Road, to create the Europe-Caucasus-Asia transport corridor, to develop and export the hydrocarbon resources of the Caspian basin to world markets. These projects are of crucial importance for a free and fully-fledged development of nations in several regions of the world. They will give impetus to transnational cooperation and have a decisive impact on the development of the global environment.

However, external threats and internal problems, pressures and involvement in the struggle for spheres of influence have not allowed young and fragile

democracies an opportunity to freely carry out the policy that would meet the interests and expectations of their peoples to strengthen and develop their statehood and to be involved in peaceful development. From the first days of their existence, they were forced to fight a hard battle for independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity. States which have suffered from acts of aggression, seizure of territories and ethnic cleansing, aggressive separatism and terrorism, rightly expect maximally effective action from the United Nations to establish a just and secure world, and to protect the principles of the United Nations Charter.

Unfortunately, the South Caucasus has become a region where all these problems, threats and risks have become stark realities. The main destabilizing factor in the situation in the South Caucasus has been aggression by Armenia against Azerbaijan; this has brought incalculable tragedies to millions of people. As a result of this aggression, Armenian armed forces have occupied 20 per cent of the territory of Azerbaijan, carried out ethnic cleansing and expelled one million Azerbaijanis from their homes. The Security Council of the United Nations passed four resolutions in this respect, unequivocally confirming the sovereignty, territorial integrity and the inviolability of the frontiers of the Republic of Azerbaijan, and which unconditionally demanded the immediate withdrawal of the Armenian armed forces from the occupied lands of Azerbaijan. But, since 1993, and until now, the Security Council's decisions remain a dead letter.

Since 1992, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) has been engaged in the settlement of the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan, but its activities have not been successful. Bilateral discussions between the Presidents of Azerbaijan and Armenia continue, but they, too, have not brought about any results yet. We have had a ceasefire for the last six years, but it is not a solution to the problems.

I appeal to the United Nations to take all necessary measures to implement the relevant Security Council resolutions. Without a settlement to the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan, and other conflicts; without the removal of factors of external pressure, including foreign military presence, it is impossible to achieve peace and security in the region. If the South Caucasus were to acquire political integrity and neutral status, it would permit the establishment of normal mutual relations among the States of the South Caucasus and ensure their harmonious integration into the world economic system.

I extend my gratitude to the organizations within the framework of the United Nations and to the donor countries for their assistance to Azerbaijani refugees and displaced persons who have already been living in a state of poverty for over eight years. We feel an acute need for the continuation and increase of critically important humanitarian assistance until they can return to their homes.

The United Nations has a great responsibility for peace in the world. We pin our hopes on the United Nations. Serious and rational reforms should increase the effectiveness of the Organization, in particular of the Security Council.

Finally, I would like to underline our collective responsibility for peace and security on the planet and express our assurance that the results of the Millennium Summit will be a reliable basis for our journey into the twenty-first century.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Majesty King Harald V, head of State of the Kingdom of Norway.

King Harald V: We must invest in the United Nations. We must give it the strength and resources it needs to accomplish the tasks we have assigned it. We owe it to our forefathers, who made it the object of their highest hopes and aspirations. We owe it to our children and grandchildren, whose future has been placed in our hands. We owe it to ourselves, because our generation has been entrusted with the knowledge to make the right decisions and the means to carry them out.

The United Nations rose from the ashes of the Second World War — from the recognition that our powers of destruction had reached the point where peace was the only option. The advent of nuclear weapons reinforced this realization.

Yet the bloodletting, devastation and misery of armed conflict are still very much a reality in Europe, in the Americas, in Asia and in Africa. The United Nations should be empowered to deal effectively with the changing nature of conflict, to detect the seeds of conflict at an early stage, to manage conflict where it cannot be prevented, to mandate and equip United Nations peace operations that can deal with the

complex nature of modern conflict. The United Nations should be empowered to provide post-conflict rehabilitation, to alleviate the suffering and protect the rights of innocent civilians, of innocent women and children, to punish genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity.

It is essential to eliminate the causes of armed conflict. Most of them are closely linked to poverty, underdevelopment, and to the violation of human rights. The Norwegian Nobel Committee has long recognized these linkages by awarding the Nobel Peace Prize not only to the United Nations peacekeeping forces, but also to the International Labour Organization, the United Nations Children's Fund, and twice to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

The fight to eliminate poverty is the overriding challenge of the international community at the turn of the millennium. The Secretary-General is advancing not only the cause of development, education and health; not only the cause of peace; not only the cause of human rights and empowerment; but all three. They are inextricably linked and mutually reinforcing.

We have all agreed on the goals for international development. We have the knowledge to achieve them, and we have the resources to achieve them. We live in an age of unparalleled promise and prosperity. We will not be forgiven — and we should not be forgiven — if we fail to fulfil this promise, if we fail to share this prosperity with the neediest among us.

The elimination of poverty is not only a bridge to peace and development, not only a bridge to human rights and individual dignity, but also a bridge to the preservation of the environment for future generations. For we shall never be able to cooperate effectively on how to husband the scarce resources of our planet, how to prevent the degradation of the environment, as long as so many are trapped in hopeless poverty.

So let us respond to the Secretary-General's call for a strengthened and revitalized United Nations not with indifference or pessimism, but with the resolve and determination it merits. I pledge that my country will do so, and together we will succeed.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Alhaji Ahmad Tejan Kabbah, President of the Republic of Sierra Leone.

President Kabbah: Let me first of all pay tribute to all those who have lost their lives in the cause of peace under the United Nations flag.

Our world Organization comprises independent sovereign States. But the United Nations is about people, all people, irrespective of their colour, creed, or social and economic status.

We therefore commend our Secretary-General for reminding us that the United Nations is for and about people, about their welfare, their safety and security, and about their future. He has done so by choosing "We the peoples" as the title of his Millennium report, a document in which he provided us with not just an agenda for the years ahead, but concrete recommendations for our collective action on behalf of the peoples of the world. We must try harder, in the words of the United Nations Charter,

> "to employ international machinery for the promotion of the economic and social advancement of all peoples".

As we enter the new millennium, we have come to realize that the tasks of this Organization have become more difficult. Most of the problems and issues that the United Nations was created to tackle just over half a century ago have taken different forms and dimensions. They have become more complex and more challenging. Many of them seem to have become immune to the prescriptions and remedies we have developed over the years to tackle, resolve or eradicate them.

In several parts of the world, we have been witnessing the emergence of renewed manifestations of political and social repression, ethnic intolerance, racist tendencies, and rampant economic inequality. A few years ago, the concern was about the so-called cold war. Today we are being confronted by widespread "hot wars" — real wars that continue to take a heavy toll on the lives of millions of people.

How then do we act on the challenges of the new century? How can the United Nations help meet the challenges that the Secretary-General has identified in his Millennium report? In my view, the answers lie in the process of adaptation.

The United Nations must adapt and re-equip itself to deal with the new manifestation of the perennial problems of human insecurity and underdevelopment. In many instances, we have to develop new approaches

and new people-centred strategies for addressing the emerging and complex issues ahead.

In several ways, Sierra Leone has tested the capacity of the United Nations to adapt and to deal with some of the challenges of the new century. For example, in the areas of human rights protection and the administration of justice, the United Nations has been called upon to adapt to a unique situation by devising an innovative process of dealing with the phenomenon of impunity. The people of Sierra Leone called upon the United Nations for assistance, and the Organization responded positively with respect to the establishment of a special court to bring to justice persons who may have committed gross violations of human rights and grave offences in violation of international law and domestic criminal law.

In the area of conflict management, the Government of Sierra Leone recently accepted a Security Council ban, albeit a temporary one, on the export of Sierra Leone diamonds. Although this has resulted in the loss of much needed revenue, we did it in order to strengthen the Organization's capacity to deal with a new menace to international peace and security, especially in Africa: the menace of conflict diamonds. We welcome the proposal of the United Kingdom to place the issue on the agenda of the Millennium Assembly.

Also in the area of conflict management, Sierra Leone expects to host more than 16,000 United Nations peacekeepers in one of the largest operations the United Nations has ever undertaken. May I, on behalf of all the people of Sierra Leone, take this opportunity to express my profound gratitude to the Security Council for giving the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) additional responsibilities within its current mandate. Our thanks go also to those countries that have contributed troops and other resources to UNAMSIL. Their efforts have given true meaning to the term collective security. The situation in Sierra Leone as it developed demanded an appropriate response from our Organization, an organization that has pledged in its Charter to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war.

As we cross the threshold of the new millennium, the international community must rededicate itself to the pursuit of peace and human security in all its forms. As the British Prime Minister, Mr. Tony Blair, suggested yesterday, nowhere is this need for rededication more pronounced than in Africa, the most disadvantaged continent on our planet today.

We must, as a community of nations, redouble our efforts to eliminate the root causes of internal conflict. We must do so in the realization that internal conflict in any part of the world represents a threat to the rest. The evidence is overwhelming, whether it involves efforts to combat terrorism, contain health hazards such as malaria and HIV/AIDS or end ethnic intolerance. The universality of human security demands collective responsibility on the part of all nations.

There are, of course, various dimensions of human security. But for many States Members of the United Nations, including Sierra Leone, the most pervasive threat to human security is internal conflict. The traditional approaches to this phenomenon are no longer adequate. We in Sierra Leone have experienced the linkage between armed conflict and issues of human security. While we welcome, for instance, recent decisions by the Security Council in the area of peace and security, we strongly believe that these should be accompanied by even more innovative responses by our development partners, and in particular by international financial and development institutions.

Internal security and stability are the most critical bases for economic and social development. Orthodox prescriptions for re-launching the economies of post-conflict countries do not go far enough. The Bretton Woods institutions advise us, no doubt with good intentions, to invest in the education and health of our peoples. But we submit that such advice should not become conditionalities to the detriment of national security, for without security — as in the case of my country — even limited socio-economic gains could be swept away virtually overnight. The normal rules and procedures for development cooperation require greater flexibility to enable rapid and viable action for rehabilitating post-conflict countries. Such action will encourage and inspire those who have been misled and who have resorted to violence to give up their weapons of war and return to normal life as responsible citizens.

Meeting the challenges of the new millennium requires us to accept the fact that Government action alone cannot solve all our problems. Partnership in one form or another is required. This Summit, the largest assembly of world leaders, affords us the opportunity

to re-examine our priorities, redefine our mission, sharpen our vision of the new century and provide the political platform on which the United Nations family can place its priority programmes for alleviating or improving the human condition throughout the world.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Thabo Mbeki, President of the Republic of South Africa.

President Mbeki: We have gathered at this important place to discuss what we might do together to address the problems that confront our common world. The billions of people we represent expect that a strong, clear, unequivocal and understandable message of hope will come out of this historic Millennium Summit. We will certainly have to jostle with the various pagan gods at whose feet we prostrate ourselves, over all of whom tower the gods of inertia, of the market and of globalization.

Scattered through the second millennium were terrible human-made moments of anti-human actions that brought great pain and misery to millions of people. Slavery was one of these. Colonialism was another, as was apartheid. The world wars were other such moments. The Holocaust carried out by Nazi Germany was such a human-made moment, as was the more recent genocide visited upon the people of Rwanda only six years ago. For many of us, all this deliberate and savage violence against human beings represents history, things that have come and gone. We choose to forget them, allowing the dead to bury the dead.

However, none of us can forget the living, whose mandates have given us the privileged possibility of speaking from this podium. Billions among the living struggle to survive in conditions of poverty, deprivation and underdevelopment. These conditions are as offensive to everything humane as anything we decry about the second millennium.

The poor of the world stand at the gates of the comfortable mansions occupied by each and every King, Queen, President, Prime Minister or Minister privileged to attend this unique meeting. The question these billions ask is, "What are you doing? You in whom we have placed our trust, what are you doing to end the deliberate and savage violence against us, which every day sentences many of us to a degrading and unnecessary death?"

Those who stand at the gates are desperately hungry for food, through no fault of their own. They die from preventable diseases through no fault of their own. They have to suffer a humiliating loss of human dignity they do not wish on anybody, including the rich.

These are the victims of the systemic violence against human beings that we accept as normal, and for which we judge the second millennium adversely. And yet, that millennium created the conditions for us to end this modern tragedy. Part of the naked truth is that the second millennium provided humanity with the capital, the technology and the human skills to end poverty and underdevelopment throughout the world. Another part of that truth is that we have refused to use this enormous capacity to end the contemporary, deliberate and savage violence of poverty and underdevelopment.

Our collective rhetoric conveys promise. The offence is that our actions communicate the message that, in reality, we do not care. We are indifferent. Our actions say the poor must bury the poor.

The fundamental challenge that faces this Millennium Summit is that, in a credible way, we must demonstrate the will to end poverty and underdevelopment in Africa and elsewhere. We must demonstrate the will to succeed, such as was demonstrated by those who died in the titanic struggle against Nazism and fascism, giving birth to this Organization.

If we took this epoch-making decision, it would not be difficult to arrive at the practical decisions about what we need to do to make the United Nations an effective, twenty-first century organization. Thus would we end its slide into a somewhat debased state that becomes a source of problems rather than a critical contributor to the urgent solutions we must find. In this regard, we will have to ensure that the poor play their role not as recipients of largesse and goodwill, but as co-determinants of what happens to the common universe of which they are an important part. The essential question we have to answer at this Millennium Summit is whether we have the courage and the conscience to demonstrate that we have the will to ensure that we accept no situation that will deny any human community its dignity.

I, like the poor at our gates, ask the question, "Will we, at last, respond to this appeal?" All of us,

including the rich, will pay a terrible price if we do not answer practically, "Yes, we do."

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Petru Lucinschi, President of the Republic of Moldova.

President Lucinschi *(spoke in Romanian, English text furnished by the delegation)*: Today, at the intersection of centuries and millenniums, it is natural to cast a critical glance over the past in order to have a clearer outlook for the future. The truth is that many things have changed for the better in recent years. The world has become more homogeneous. The feeling of inferiority, by which the destinies of many nations have been marked, is disappearing now. At the moment when the United Nations was founded, two thirds of its present Members were not yet independent States. Furthermore, in Eastern Europe, of which the Republic of Moldova is a part, the number of countries has doubled.

At the same time, we have to recognize that the process of detente is being accompanied by the proliferation of local conflicts, and poverty has reached huge proportions. Under these conditions, apart from the efforts that every State has to make on its own, only a strong United Nations will be able to offer us equal opportunities for development, by diminishing the gap between prosperity and poverty and by encouraging the new democratic processes. In this respect, there is a need for a deeper definition and more rigorous observation of the rules of conduct at the international level, where the United Nations has to play a central role.

One of the main objectives of the United Nations in the new millennium will be more efficient management of the advances in the fields of information and high technology, so that they can be maintained within the framework of the development of civilization. In this connection, it is necessary to adopt and to implement strictly the guarantee measures of the nuclear security system in order to decrease the size of the more and more sophisticated arsenals, guided by the Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems.

The adaptation of the United Nations to the new realities corresponds entirely to our common interests. However, we have to recognize that, although the accomplishment of these objectives will require efforts from every Member State, the major role is to be played, as before, by the big States. Albert Einstein used to say that powerful States need no ambassadors, their force speaks for itself. As for small States, it does matter how they express themselves. Being realistic, we realize that the security of the twenty-first century will depend on how the big States succeed in understanding and cooperating with each other and on the degree of harmonization of their interests. At the same time, we would like this to take place under conditions of respect for small States' legitimate interests.

There is no doubt that, as the Secretary-General has mentioned in the millennium report, all members of the international community should take advantage of the opportunities of globalization. For this purpose we have to find the corresponding modalities to mobilize all societies, Governments and international financial resources. Only in this way is it possible to build a stable and prosperous world, no matter from which point of the compass one is looking.

The Republic of Moldova reaffirms its support for the further development of the reform process of the United Nations, in particular of the Security Council. We support a moderate increase in the number of permanent and non-permanent Council members and ensuring better representation of the Member States, both the developed and the developing ones.

The Republic of Moldova — a small State confronting transition problems; a State whose territorial integrity is being threatened by the conflict in the eastern regions, caused by the collapse of the Soviet Union; a State facing difficulties as a result of a series of natural disasters that happened this year — sees in the United Nations a hope, a support and a guarantee of the development of every country.

Today the United Nations faces a new era, in which imagination and creativity must be matched by well tempered optimism and authentic pragmatism. The 189 Member States of the United Nations which presently grant personality and substance to the Organization undoubtedly possess the material and intellectual resources, as well as the political will, necessary for the achievement of certain projects serving the general interests of mankind. The Republic of Moldova supports the provisions of the Final Declaration of the Summit and joins the international community in its wish to create a better, peaceful and prosperous world.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Gnassingbé Eyadéma, President of the Togolese Republic.

President Eyadéma (Togo) (*spoke in French*): From this prestigious podium, I first welcome the felicitous initiative of the Secretary-General to convene this year the Millennium Summit, at which we are asked to examine the role of the United Nations in the world at the beginning of the twenty-first century. This extremely relevant initiative comes at a time when the world is entering an era of great change, with the end of the cold war and the dazzling development of information technology.

These transformations command our attention. They invite us to review the way in which we work and organize ourselves, so that we may acquire new and more effective instruments and institutions more suited to the new world realities.

The institution we have created for ourselves has stood the test of time, despite the storms and hurricanes that it has had to brave. It has held firm because its foundations are solid, but this does not mean that it does not need to be revitalized.

It is in this context that I would like to mention two important areas whose image I think the United Nations should transform: on the one hand, peacekeeping, and, on the other, development.

For a number of years many voices have been raised condemning the fact that the composition of the Security Council, the body to which the Charter entrusts in Article 24 the "primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security", no longer reflects current power relationships in the world. As the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, says in his report, its "composition ... today does not fully represent either the character or the needs of our globalized world." (*A/54/2000, para. 44*).

When the United Nations was created in 1945, two thirds of the current Member States were not independent. The world's population was 2.5 billion. Today, it is close to 6 billion. Africa, whose population is over 700 million, is made up of 53 of the 189 Member States of the United Nations. Over a third of the Security Council's debates and deliberations deal with Africa.

We therefore believe that it is high time to review the Council's composition in order to allow new permanent members to be chosen from among the new economic Powers that have emerged since the Second World War, to be joined by developing country regional Powers.

Furthermore, the emergence of new types of conflicts in recent years requires us to better design United Nations peacekeeping operations and to make them more effective. Otherwise, the United Nations would be weakened in its peace missions, as we were able to see in Bosnia, and more recently in Sierra Leone.

We are pleased that the Secretary-General has set up a high-level Panel that has prepared a report on all aspects of peacekeeping operations. Chaired by the former Minister for Foreign Affairs of Algeria, Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi, that Panel made very important recommendations in the report submitted to the Secretary-General on 17 August.

We firmly support recommendation 3, contained in annex III of the report, according to which United Nations peacekeeping forces, once deployed, must be able to fulfil their mandate professionally and successfully. They must also be capable of defending themselves and of controlling those on the ground who would try to undermine their action by violence.

We also support recommendation 4, requesting that the mandates of United Nations peacekeeping forces be clear, credible and achievable. We also wish these operations to be adequately financed. We hope that the Security Council and the Member States of the United Nations will consider favourably the recommendations of the Brahimi report, and will ensure that they are implemented rapidly.

In the area of development, it is clear that multinational and transnational corporations play a crucial role today in world economic affairs. But they are noticeably absent from the United Nations economic forums.

In the same way as work is carried out within the International Labour Organization with the active participation of Government representatives, employers and employees, I believe that it would be desirable, within the Economic and Social Council, for Government representatives to come together with representatives of multinational corporations, who

wield so much influence in the economic sphere. The effectiveness and the impact of that important United Nations body could also be enhanced in this way.

There you have a few thoughts that I wanted to bring to your kind attention.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Festus G. Mogae, President of the Republic of Botswana.

President Mogae: A great many global issues of fundamental importance that need to be mentioned have been mentioned and fully articulated by others, by colleagues whose oratorical brilliance and technical competence I cannot hope to equal, let alone surpass. Consequently, I will confine myself to addressing the scourge of HIV/AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa, including and especially southern Africa.

I stand before the Assembly to claim the dubious distinction of being leader of one of the countries that is most seriously affected by HIV/AIDS in the whole world. The fight against HIV/AIDS is therefore for us the challenge of the millennium.

In the last 25 years we achieved economic growth rates comparable to those of the Asian tigers, attained human development indices that were the envy of many, practised multi-party democracy and accountable and transparent governance, maintained an open society and ran an open economy.

Now we daily witness elderly mothers mourning for the untimely deaths of their beloved children, babies born today only to be buried the next day and a growing population of orphans yearning for parental love and care. These are the traumatizing realities of HIV/AIDS with which we live and with which we have to contend.

Having enjoyed peace and security and steady economic growth, we suddenly find our gains in social advancement reversed by this scourge. The economically active population in our society, our most precious resource, is being decimated. Our life expectancy is calculated to have been reduced by 20 years, from 67 to 47.

It is frightening to note that half of the people who become infected with HIV/AIDS are under the age of 25 years.

One of our major strategies to fight this rampant HIV/AIDS scourge has been to establish a multisectoral National Council that I personally chair. At the executive or technical level, we have established the National AIDS Coordinating Agency, headed by a senior official, to implement anti-HIV programmes. The thrust of our strategy is information, education and communication, and we have combined this with concerted efforts to destigmatize HIV/AIDS. We continue to hold consultative meetings with all key stakeholders. Our HIV/AIDS programmes include the prevention of mother-to-child transmission through the use of anti-retroviral drugs. We have set up Voluntary Testing and Counselling Centres in our major settlements, and more such facilities are being extended to other parts of the country. Community mobilization is being undertaken through house-to-house counselling. We have established alliances with Botswana's youth and other civil society organizations.

Our Government is also implementing a programme of home-based care to ease congestion in the hospitals and other health centres. More manpower and financial resources have been allocated, including through the diversion of development funds towards the fight against HIV/AIDS. We are grateful to Governments, the United Nations system, private organizations and non-governmental organizations that have established partnerships with us in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

So far, the Government of Botswana funds 80 per cent of all HIV/AIDS prevention and care activities, and this may not be sustainable. Some of our children have been infected at their very first experiment with sex. To spread our message as broadly as possible, we have established multi-sectoral HIV/AIDS committees in every town and every village in our country. We are determined to eradicate the scourge, or at least, halt its spread.

The HIV/AIDS pandemic is a global problem which calls for global action. The pandemic threatens human development and social and economic security. There is therefore an urgent need for concerted action on the part of the international community as a whole to fight this scourge.

For mankind to prevail over this scourge, we need commitment and unity of purpose. For those of us most directly affected, one more day of delayed action is a day too late for thousands of our people. Our people are crying out for help. Let us respond while there is still time.

In his report, the Secretary-General has called for "the reduction of HIV infection rates in persons 15 to 24 years of age — by 25 per cent within the most affected countries before the year 2005 and by 25 per cent globally before 2010". (*A/54/2000, para. 128*). To achieve this target, we will need an infusion of tangible and adequate resources.

As developing countries, we cannot deal on our own with the whole spectrum of requisites for education and sensitization, testing and counselling, adolescent reproductive health, prevention of mother-to-child transmissions, acquisition of drugs and medication and care for the affected populations. We therefore need to pool our efforts and resources and work with the United Nations and the private sector to seek an effective remedy for this pandemic.

I am confident that, as world leaders, if we act in unison in addressing this challenge that faces our common humanity, we will have good reason to celebrate our contribution towards saving "succeeding generations from the scourge of war" — war in all its manifestations.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Emomali Rakhmonov, President of the Republic of Tajikistan.

President Rakhmonov (*spoke in Russian*): The hopes and aspirations of all the peoples of the world are focused on the work of our world forum. The peoples of the planet expect us to develop a strategy of partnership that will respond to their key interests and meet their needs.

We are firmly convinced that our Summit provides us with a wonderful opportunity to discuss issues of United Nations restructuring so as to address twenty-first-century goals and to re-evaluate the global challenges faced by humanity at its current stage of development.

Tajikistan wholeheartedly supports the Millennium Assembly's determination to strengthen the key role of the United Nations as a universal mechanism for maintaining international peace and security and for developing multilateral cooperation based on reaching a mutually acceptable balance of interests for all nations.

The process of globalization that is so dramatically influencing the evolution of society should be aimed at eliminating, rather than intensifying, the serious imbalances that divide the world today. Therefore, in order to avoid social, economic and political upheaval and shock and to ensure economic security, we believe that these processes should be backed up by a considered and purposefully oriented social policy, especially in countries with economies in transition.

The United Nations is called upon to encourage processes aimed at reducing the development gap between the rich and poor nations, in particular, by attracting investments to those countries with economies in transition that do not possess oil and gas resources.

Tajikistan shares the view of many that forgiving the accumulated debts of the countries that have gone through large-scale conflicts or natural disasters would provide a powerful impetus to sustainable peace-building in those countries. We are convinced that such measures would free up significant internal resources that could be used for education and health care, for alleviating the consequences of conflicts and for responding more effectively to natural disasters.

Tajikistan is striving to do whatever it can to contribute to the resolution of pressing ecological issues. We call upon the Assembly to support the well-known initiative of our country to proclaim the year 2003 as the "International Year of Freshwater". If, in the coming century, through our consolidated efforts, we are able to ensure access to freshwater for all the people on our planet, we will save every second citizen on the earth from infectious diseases. That is important not only for Tajikistan, but for the entire international community.

If the Sarez Lake dam breaks, billions of cubic metres of water will pour down the nearby valleys, flooding millions of hectares of land and making approximately 5 million citizens of Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Afghanistan homeless.

An equally pressing global ecological problem is the Aral Sea crisis, which is the result of the irrational usage of natural resources. These problems can be dealt with only with the assistance of the international community.

The community of nations must take decisive steps and coordinated action to fight international terrorism, the illegal drug trade and the uncontrolled

trade in weapons. Together with our partners in the Commonwealth of Independent States, Tajikistan is seriously concerned that we are being turned into a source of constant threat to the security of other countries, and not only those of Central Asia. We believe that the international community should take extraordinary and significant measures to curb aggression, terrorism and other forms of extremism.

It is important that we increase our activities aimed at achieving a peaceful settlement to the Afghan problem. The lessons to be learned from what has happened show us that only with the firm support of the leading world Powers — first and foremost, Russia and the United States of America — and, of course, with the goodwill of the parties to the conflict, will the United Nations be able to resolve the conflict in Afghanistan. In this connection, we consider the first meeting of the Russian-American working group on Afghanistan, held in Washington in August 2000, to be a promising start.

We believe that the peacekeeping activities of the Organization should be based on full respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of nations and that they should be timely, equal to the situation as it develops and based on the coordinated collective actions of the international community. Only the Security Council has the exclusive right to sanction, on behalf of the international community, the use of force for the purpose of maintaining peace or restoring international peace and security.

It is our sacred duty to future generations not only to protect the United Nations, but, working together with it, to make the world a better and more secure place that is worthy of them so that they can live better and happier lives.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): Before giving the floor to the next speaker, I would like to make an appeal. There are 21 speakers remaining on the list of speakers for this meeting. Since we must exhaust the list at each meeting, I appeal to the participants in the Millennium Summit to respect the five-minute time limit for each speaker. That will allow us to hear all the speakers on the list for this meeting.

The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency the Honourable Bernard Dowiyogo, President of the Republic of Nauru.

President Dowiyogo: The Republic of Nauru is pleased to participate in this historic Millennium Summit.

Despite having joined the United Nations only last year, Nauru values very highly the work of this body and also holds the highest expectations for its success in the new century, since it was through the assistance of the United Nations some thirty-five years ago that the people of Nauru secured the support of the international community for a vote on self-determination.

Having enjoyed thirty-five years of independence, Nauru is greatly encouraged that, through the assistance of the United Nations, our East Timor brothers and sisters have secured a path towards independence. On this occasion we join in prayer with the families of the three United Nations personnel killed yesterday on duty in East Timor and yet we can remain confident that the continued support of the United Nations will see the people of East Timor through to their final step of nationhood.

On the other hand, our Melanesian brothers and sisters in West Papua are still striving to break the imposition of colonial domination and foreign control following the so-called act of free choice in 1969. It is imperative that West Papua be given the rightful opportunity of a democratic referendum by its indigenous peoples. The United Nations cannot stand by and witness the destruction of the people of West Papua, where already more than a half million people have been lost as a result of human rights abuses. We must not witness another catastrophe in this area as occurred in East Timor.

Nauru would therefore support a United Nations resolution that would permit the people of West Papua the choice of self-determination.

My Government is concerned that the area comprising the Pacific States does not receive sufficient attention from the United Nations. So often it becomes lumped with Asia and is thereby overwhelmed by Asia. Oceania is a distinct area with unique characteristics and challenges. The Pacific should be recognized by the United Nations on its own as a separate regional group.

I am happy to charge the Assembly with the task of ensuring that, during this session of the Summit and

the General Assembly, the Pacific region become a separate national group.

As small island developing States we are especially noted for our vulnerability, particularly in respect of the fragility of our environment. Together with our brothers and sisters of the Pacific, the people of Nauru are threatened with genocide through global warming and the rise in sea-level. Nauru joins all responsible nations of the world to urge, especially those countries responsible for the present levels of pollution, swift and early implementation of the goals enshrined in the Kyoto Protocol.

Indeed, any cold wind is likely to inflict severe damage, whether that cold wind arose from the rise in sea-levels, pollution of fishing grounds, financial sanctions or, as in Nauru's case, the exhaustion of its only export, phosphate. While tourist posters may conjure up images of paradise in the Pacific islands, the developmental challenges are real and ominous. With high rates of population growth and vulnerable economies there is increasing dependence on external aid and there has been a steady decline in per capita incomes and standards of living resulting in increased poverty.

With substantial external debt, the developing States of the Pacific not only require development assistance but considerable foreign private investment.

Even as small island developing States have attempted to strengthen their slender resources, they occasionally come under attack from the developed economies. The attacks recently from the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) on offshore financial regimes, including Nauru, have not been based so much on money laundering, but rather on the more dubious reason of so-called harmful tax practices. Nauru has been appreciative of the support of the United Nations Offshore Forum which has at least recognized the damage posed by the OECD attacks. If the small island developing States are to be sustainably developed they will need a massive cooperative effort from the developed States and a genuine appreciation for their unique challenges.

One of the developed States which has extended a hand of cooperation has been the Republic of China. As a robust democracy and champion of human rights values, the Republic of China has demonstrated both capacity and enthusiasm to contribute meaningfully to international welfare and progress. Along with a number of other States Members of the United Nations, Nauru therefore supports the inclusion of a supplementary item on the agenda of the General Assembly to examine the international situation of the Republic of China.

The 23 million people of the Republic of China deserve no less than proper international recognition, and as long as they are excluded from the United Nations we cannot consider this body universally representative of the peoples of the world.

In conclusion, I am hopeful that as the United Nations strides into the new century, reform of the Charter will assume greater prominence. We certainly cannot accept that the United Nations continue as it does without allowing wider and deeper involvement of the international community in addressing core global challenges. As leaders, we have a duty to the peoples of the world to ensure that the new century is a safer, more prosperous one than the twentieth century.

In this the two thousandth anniversary of the birth of our Christ, it is my sincere hope that love and understanding amongst the peoples of the world will prevail, for it has been said that the rule of law without love is tyranny.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Ferenc Mádl, President of the Republic of Hungary.

President Mádl: At the threshold of the twenty-first century, we live in a time of serious challenges and great opportunities. Today, there can be no doubt in our minds that a new phenomenon, globalization, is clearly on the march. It is in this context that the United Nations should spare no effort to unfold the hitherto hidden promises of globalization for the benefit of all mankind.

By the same token, it is the common responsibility of the Member States to play their part effectively to counter the disadvantages of this new phenomenon, especially for those of us who have so far been less fortunate. In this regard, the millennium report of the Secretary-General deserves our full attention and deep appreciation. I am more than confident that his major conclusions will find their way to help us fulfil the enormous tasks this Summit faces.

It is often, but rightly, said that global challenges require global responses. In our time, nations can and will only be able to fight poverty, transnational

organized crime, corruption, money-laundering, international terrorism and illicit drug-trafficking if they act in concert. Hungary is ready and willing to play its part to that end.

One of the major concerns of the international community is the issue of the protection of the environment. I believe that the time has come for us all to rededicate ourselves to address environmental issues, including the degradation of the environment, and, at the same time, to exert redoubled efforts to preserve the blessings of nature on our planet for generations to come. The principle of polluter-pays should find its proper place in all relevant international documents. In this regard, Hungary is more than prepared to act regionally, as well as globally, to that end.

For us Hungarians, a nation proud of its history, values represent the basis of policies. The Republic of Hungary also pursues a foreign policy based on values. Consequently, universal values such as respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms — including minority rights — democracy, the rule of law and social justice remain close to our hearts and minds. In this respect, I wish to recall that the United Nations has played a more than commendable role in the international protection of human rights. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and various relevant conventions helped the dignity and fundamental freedoms of the individual to flourish.

However, as far as human rights are concerned, I believe there is a historical obligation on the part of the United Nations. I hope and pray that international protection for the rights of minorities, including the relevant responsibilities as well as the accountability of the States concerned, will also be drawn up in a legally binding comprehensive instrument. The sooner the international community acts, the better service we render to freedom, democracy and the protection of human rights.

This Summit is a precious and timely opportunity to give new impetus to the reform of the United Nations. Our rapidly changing world needs a renewed United Nations. To better reflect the new political and economic realities, it is also indispensable that the Security Council be enlarged, with new permanent members, to include Germany and Japan among others.

The anniversary of Hungary's 1,000 years of Statehood coincides with the new millennium. I bring the message of celebration of our people to this forum. The values Hungary represents and the objectives we pursue will also make it possible for us to take part in the renewal of the commitment to the noble purposes and principles the United Nations is called to act upon in the twenty-first century. It is in this spirit that my country stands ready to contribute our share to work for a safer and more secure world with the help of the United Nations.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Milan Kučan, President of the Republic of Slovenia.

President Kučan *(spoke in Slovene; English text furnished by the delegation)*: This historic session is an opportunity to reaffirm the positive role of the United Nations and to stress the demand for the respect of human dignity and human individual and collective rights as the fundamental and universal principle of its future actions. In today's world, peace and security, the two basic objectives of the Untied Nations, depend mainly on consistent respect of this principle. This is the key challenge of our future.

Experience tells us that recognizing, promoting and protecting human rights is equally important for peace and security, as are recognizing and protecting the sovereignty of States. As a rule, armed conflicts today are taking place within the borders of sovereign States, and not between them. These internal wars engender violence, genocide and ethnic cleansing, where people's fates depend on their belonging to a particular race, nationality or religion. Regional security and global peace are becoming increasingly dependent on the United Nations capacity to intervene efficiently when States are perpetrating violence against their own citizens.

The international community has already intervened in such conflicts. In most cases, the intervention came too late, the means were inadequate and the results were insufficient. Although these are recognized facts, we still lack systemic and agreed solutions that would ensure timely and efficient results. It is also for these reasons that the reform of the United Nations is imperative. In this context, I would place the principle of State sovereignty, which also includes a State's own responsibility for its citizens and for other States. That principle cannot be an excuse for systematic violence and mass violations of human

rights. It also cannot be the value that would prevent United Nations intervention in such cases.

We were all aware of, and are mutually responsible for, the tragedies that occurred in Rwanda, Cambodia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Srebrenica and Vukovar. Today, those types of tragedies continue to occur in the world. We are also responsible for preventing them from happening again. Clear signs in south-eastern Europe in particular warn that the tragedy could happen again.

I am therefore confident that we shall find the necessary political will to modernize and equip the United Nations for this task. I wish to believe that those who have been entrusted with a seat in the Security Council by virtue of the United Nations Charter — and thus with a special responsibility to safeguard world peace and security — will gather the necessary commitment, spirit and courage to take timely decisions.

The Security Council must act in line with its primary responsibility to preserve peace and security in the world. It must recognize circumstances that demand United Nations authorized action, including the use of force. It must respect the principle of protecting State sovereignty, but not by remaining paralysed when faced with crimes against humanity. The international community, led by the United Nations, has the obligation to act to protect threatened and innocent civilian populations against genocide, ethnic cleansing and systematic mass violence perpetrated by the authorities in their own State. Those who enjoy the right of veto, which represents a special responsibility borne by permanent members of the Security Council, must not hide behind arguments that national internal affairs are at stake and thereby paralyse the Council's work and responsibility.

I support the appeal of Secretary-General Kofi Annan regarding humanitarian intervention, quoted in his report "We the peoples". I expect that, together, we shall strive to make it possible for the international community to be capable of reacting and ensuring that, when the principle of state sovereignty is abused, it does not remain helpless in the face of violence and gross violations of fundamental human rights.

Humanitarian intervention is an active response to a humanitarian crisis and a prolongation of preventive diplomacy, which attempts to solve disputes before they degenerate into conflicts. It requires a new chapter in international law which would be adapted to contemporary understanding of international morality. International humanitarian law is an impressive idea and a requirement of our times. For the time being, its norms are vague, often unknown and frequently deliberately violated. For this reason, it is imperative to elaborate a doctrine for humanitarian intervention based on a modern interpretation of the United Nations Charter and in line with new international relations and norms, which in certain conditions give priority to the protection of human rights. My conviction in this respect is reinforced by my human and political experience of the Balkan tragedy and of Slovenia's participation in peacekeeping missions.

Despite positive achievements, we remain, at the turn of the millennium, still far from achieving our goals in terms of global security and peace, poverty eradication, reducing the enormous disparities in welfare, development and ensuring social and legal security of people. We are far from achieving equality among the different civilizations we belong to and which enrich the material and spiritual lives of humankind. The opportunity has now also come to recognize the universal significance of human rights for global security and peace in the globalized world, with multiple centres of development of human civilization, and to prevent erstwhile confrontations between military and political blocs from being replaced by confrontations between civilizations, cultures and religions, which would have fatal consequences for the future of humankind.

In the future, too, the role of the United Nations will remain irreplaceable. However, its authority and reputation will not be ensured by our words. People's faith in the United Nations will be strengthened by its effectiveness and capacity to implement declared principles, and by its guarantee of peace, security, human dignity and human rights.

Slovenia supports the noble principles and objectives for which we have gathered here. Now, courageous steps are needed. I am confident that, in the spirit of the United Nations, we are capable of making them.

Finally, I am pleased to inform the Assembly that Slovenia will increase its financial contribution to United Nations peace operations in the coming year.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Paul Biya, President of the Republic of Cameroon.

President Biya (*spoke in French*): Cameroon, formerly under United Nations trusteeship, has remained deeply committed to this Organization and to the principles on which it is founded. I am thus extremely pleased to participate in this Millennium Summit, which will be set down in letters of gold in the history of the United Nations.

At the outset, I wish to congratulate the Co-Chairpersons on their elections. We see in this presidency of North and South a harbinger of new times, a sign of the determination of the peoples of the United Nations to approach the twenty-first century together and to build the future together in a spirit of a contract of solidarity.

I am also pleased to commend the action of our Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, whom the people of Cameroon and I had the pleasure of welcoming last May. I congratulate him once again for his enlightening report and the concrete proposals formulated with the current Summit in mind.

The fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations five years ago gave us an early opportunity to engage in collective introspection and in lively consideration of the role and future mission of the United Nations. The final Declaration adopted at that time affirmed the intangibility of the ideals, principles and objectives set out in the Charter and points out the road to follow for the Member States.

By amplifying and extending that Declaration, this Summit, at the threshold between two centuries and two millenniums, invites us to reiterate our active faith in the ideals and objectives of the United Nations by consolidating what should endure and by reforming what needs to be reformed.

Having remained faithful to its ideals and objectives, the United Nations can take pride today in its striking achievements in the promotion of peace, security, respect for human rights, democracy and international economic cooperation. However, many scourges remain: wars and conflicts, massive violations of human rights and the ever widening gap between North and South. New scourges have emerged, such as AIDS, whose seroprevalence in many countries and regions would seem to augur very difficult times to come.

The United Nations, which is facing all these challenges, needs the support of our political will to meet as best it can the legitimate aspirations of the peoples of the United Nations to an equitable share of the fruits of globalization, the advent of a world free from war and poverty, and respect — everywhere and for everyone — for all human rights. These are and remain the legitimate aspirations of the peoples of the United Nations.

It is up to us today to give this Organization the means to make these aspirations a reality. This will necessarily require a just and equitable solution to the debt problem; the strengthening of financial capacities and hence the action of our Organization to ensure enhanced support for subregional organizations; and the priority quest for the prevention of armed conflicts.

In today's world, which tends to relegate human beings to the background, our Organization, if it is to carry out its mission efficiently, must meet the challenge of ethical values. If globalization is not accompanied by a new moral order, if it lacks that extra spirit that constitutes solidarity among nations and peoples, it runs the risk of jeopardizing peace, which is so cherished by our times.

In truth, our world needs ethics. As a set of moral values, ethics constitute an essential expectation on the part of the entire human community. Thanks to ethics, the centrality of human beings in our policies and actions will be enshrined. Indeed, how can we speak of human rights without speaking of the right to development? What do democracy and good governance mean without the ethics of management for the common good? Are not ethics of international solidarity necessary in dealing with the debts of poor countries?

We call for the establishment within the United Nations Secretariat of a committee or of an international ethics monitor, entrusted precisely with the task of promoting fundamental and universal human values between and within nations.

This Summit provides us an opportunity for thoughtful and fruitful reflection about our future. Let us conduct it with optimism, assuming our responsibilities with respect to future generations. This optimism must be based on the rock-hard foundations

of solidarity. On the eve of the twenty-first century, it is up to us to courageously undertake the building of a future free from war and poverty.

For its part, Cameroon will be an active partner in all efforts to guarantee for future generations the benefits of all the values and ideals of the United Nations for a prosperous international community, one with justice, solidarity, harmony and peace.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency The Honourable Kenny Anthony, Prime Minister and Minister for Finance, Economic Affairs and Information of Saint Lucia.

Mr. Anthony (Saint Lucia): We are gathered here today to reaffirm our faith in this Organization, this United Nations. We are gathered here to reconfirm that the purposes and principles of its Charter can safely lead us in the new millennium and fulfil the ageless expectation of a world free of poverty, free of hunger, free of war, free of the dictatorship of the mighty and free for us to enjoy our right to development.

But why should Saint Lucia, an island of 238 square miles, with a population of 155,000 persons, be interested in the will and conscience of the United Nations? Has this body demonstrated in any way that it is a sanctuary for small island developing States? Was it not a promise from the time of its birth to protect the weak, vulnerable and marginalized? Was this not the hope?

So I ask, where is the hope when the World Trade Organization (WTO) has orchestrated the destruction of the economies of some small Caribbean countries, through a ruling that condemns the preferential marketing arrangements for their bananas in Europe as being anti-free trade? How can this be just when these arrangements are a life force of the economies of these countries? How can this be defensible when the Caribbean banana trade represents only 2 per cent of the world banana trade? Where are equity, justice and fairness when other developing countries participate in this attack on our livelihood? Where is the promise when the member countries of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development arrogate to themselves the right to make pronouncements on the efficacy of the international financial services industries of a number of Caribbean countries, when they imperiously seek to determine the nature of our tax regimes by blacklisting those countries as harmful tax havens? Harmful to whom?

In this new age, we are exhorted to be competitive. Yet, whenever we manage to succeed in this endeavour, our developed world shouts "Foul!" and accuses us of being harmful and discriminatory. Therefore, I say that those prophets of the new age of globalization and trade liberalization who trumpet hope in their praises of that new age do so only because they are the ones who enjoy its benefits. But for us in small island States like Saint Lucia, what we hear is the deafening silence of a new order that ignores our special needs. What we experience is the insensitivity and the lack of interest of the mighty as they manipulate the system for their selfish ends. How can we laud the new order? How can we sing its praises?

We are gathered here at a time of supreme paradox in the history of mankind. We meet at a time when the peoples of the world can celebrate the unparalleled progress that humankind has made in the last century. Yet we are gathering at a time when they can also reflect on the unprecedented horrors and contradictions that human civilization has visited upon itself during this epoch. On the one hand, we have a world of unlimited possibility, a world of technological wizardry — all inflated to millennial proportions. On the other hand, there is a digital divide that more than ever extends the gap between the haves and the have-nots into those who know from those who do not.

Today, life expectancy has increased. Educational, nutritional and health standards have improved qualitatively and quantitatively, but we have never, ever, before been stricken by diseases of the same nature and on the same scale as those that presently afflict us.

The world's economy has generated more wealth than at any other time in history, and the prospects for economic prosperity are a lot brighter for a larger percentage of the world's population than ever before. But how can we explain the fact that, according to the conference report on eradicating global poverty, "Parliamentary Action Agenda for the Twenty-first Century", 3 billion people on the planet are living on less than $1 a day and 1 billion subsist on less than $3 dollars a day? Today, the combined wealth of the three richest people in the world is greater than the combined gross domestic product of the 48 poorest countries in

the world. Of the 100 largest economies in the world, 51 are corporations, not countries.

How can we explain the fact that international assistance from wealthy countries to poorer countries has reached its lowest point in 20 years? Where is the collective conscience of humankind? Where is our sense of justice? Where is the brotherhood that binds us together? Where is the hope?

Today, there is an evil stalking our civilization. It is the trafficking and consumption of illicit drugs. Every day one of our young citizens succumbs to these drugs, and I know that we may have lost another genius. Day after day, we persist in pursuing strategies that are clearly not working. We must urgently review those strategies. We must consider and commit ourselves to new approaches to eradicating the scourge of drug trafficking and addiction, otherwise we will lose not only our young people but also our communities, and in time, our Governments.

If the United Nations truly wishes to embrace small States and the developing world and live up to the promise of its birth, it must redefine global governance so as to embody the key principles of inclusiveness, equality, transparency and participatory action. Due deference and recognition must be paid to the special conditions of small developing countries. We must accept the constraints imposed upon them by geography and population size. We must understand their limited internal markets and resource endowment. We must appreciate their low levels of economic diversification. We must realize their high susceptibility to external shocks. We must sympathize with their vulnerability to natural disasters and the effects of environmental change. The United Nations system must take the leading role in the refashioning of multilateral economic governance so as to establish a new regime that is fully legitimate and effective, so that States like Saint Lucia, given their openness, small size, diseconomies of scale and vulnerability, are not further victimized, marginalized and ostracized.

The new millennium presents for us a special historical opportunity, a chance for new beginnings, a window through which desired moral imperatives can infuse the international system with new guiding principles for a different, fairer world order. In the existing plethora of international organizations, the United Nations system must lie at the legislative and normative centre of the world order. The United Nations system is the only universal forum capable of institutionalizing development cooperation. Yet rich and powerful members of this body seek to denature it and strip it of its developmental role and focus. In the context of the global order, the United Nations must become the eternal symbol of the world community for equality in rights and unity of action — an institution where weakness can be ameliorated by justice and fairness. We cannot build a civilization without a conscience.

If there is to be hope that the United Nations can fashion a twenty-first century free of want and free of fear, then we must accept that the pursuit of genuine global peace and security cannot be attained merely through peacekeeping, but rather by addressing the root causes of conflict, poverty, deprivation and discrimination among the world's peoples and nations.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Goh Chok Tong, Prime Minister of the Republic of Singapore.

Mr. Goh (Singapore): Our world is becoming more globalized, yet at the same time more fragmented. Technological advances have brought the world closer, but they have also opened up divides between those who are able to cope with the resultant challenges and those who lack the capacity to do so.

We need to update and strengthen the United Nations to deal with these new problems, as well as the stubborn old ones. We need to do so because no nation can tackle these challenges alone.

I wish to highlight three areas of concern in this regard.

First, the nation-State is being redefined. The power within States is flowing downwards and being localized in provinces and cities. At the same time, State sovereignty is being circumscribed by regional and multilateral organizations. Furthermore, new actors — for example, global corporations, some of which have larger outputs than the gross domestic product of some Member States — and non-governmental organizations, some of which have more international clout than some Governments — are now a prominent and integral part of international life. How do we engage these new power players in a constructive way in the United Nations? What balance can we find between the national role of sovereign

States and the international mandate of multilateral organizations?

Secondly, there has been a growing empowerment of the market in recent years. The financial industry holds more assets than the central banks of the world combined. The value of our national currencies is determined every day by the market rather than by our central banks. Three years ago, dramatic flows of volatile short-term capital destabilized economies and wiped out years of hard work in several Asian countries.

However, opting out of the global market is not a solution. So how can the United Nations help developing countries build the capabilities that will enable them to become part of the new world? How can we help small economies maintain control of their destiny as they liberalize and open up?

Thirdly, globalization and the knowledge revolution will widen the income gap between countries, and hence create new tensions. Our world risks being sharply divided between countries which are able to take advantage of globalization and others which cannot; between countries with high education levels and those which have low literacy rates; and between those which are Internet-savvy and those which do not have access to even the basic computer.

What can the United Nations do to help minimize these new inequalities? I offer one simple idea for a start. The United Nations should provide the leadership within the community of multilateral organizations to help the poorer nations develop the capacity to profit from globalization and the knowledge revolution. The United Nations, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank and several other international organizations were created in a different era to deal with different challenges. They need to be updated. Furthermore, these institutions work separately, and not as a team. Today, however, there is an imperative for them to coordinate their efforts. They need to get together to assess what competencies the poorer nations need to develop in this new era. They should then put in place coordinated programmes to build capacity for globalization and the knowledge revolution. I call upon the Secretary-General to institute regular dialogues among the multilateral organizations to bring about such coordination.

That said, however effective we make the United Nations, it cannot by itself solve the problems of the world. The onus is also on us, acting collectively within our regional groupings, to help increase our own capabilities. Individual countries must also have the national leadership and institutions to achieve stability, growth and equity for their people.

In short, national unity of purpose, cohesive regions, and a multilateral framework under the leadership of a rejuvenated United Nations — these are what will give us hope and confidence for the twenty-first century.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency The Honourable Kenny Anthony, Prime Minister and Minister for Finance, Development, Planning and National Security of Saint Kitts and Nevis.

Mr. Anthony (Saint Kitts and Nevis): I begin my statement by saluting the architects of this Millennium Summit. The Summit is opportune and offers us, as leaders, a chance to build on the progress we have made, while we reflect, in an open and honest way, on the way forward and on the future of the United Nations. The Summit comes at a time of heightened expectations within our own respective countries. This implies that we must engage in a sober and honest examination of problems that confront our peoples and those confronting the Organization. We must therefore use this occasion to re-energize and refocus our foreign policies and national programmes to fit the new global framework and to benefit all the peoples of the world.

I say it categorically: this is not a matter I take lightly. It is a monumental task, one that requires boldness and a commitment of vision to fashion a tomorrow that will not only reflect the dawn of a new day but also the realization of peoples' legitimate hopes and expectations. That is the mandate of my Government, and my Administration is committed to it. In the challenge to raise the standard of living for our people we cannot and must not now relent. The cause of people and the preservation of peace and human security is a work in progress.

It is within that context that my country credits the United Nations as having tremendous relevance in our lives. To us, the Millennium Summit is a call for collective action: collective action to create a more effective United Nations. I have witnessed some successes in the United Nations, but I have also seen the Organization frustrated. Although the General Assembly remains democratic, my Government is still

concerned that while Member States extol the virtues of good governance and democracy within States, they seek at the international level to preserve a system within the Security Council that is undemocratic and inimical to true democracy within the institution.

The reform of the Security Council has defied resolution for too long. Saint Kitts and Nevis encourages democracy within and among States. We celebrated that tradition recently when we welcomed new Member States into our fraternity of nations. In this same spirit, I trust that the United Nations will help to secure the requisite understanding that will soon enable the millions of people on Taiwan to benefit from this international spring of brotherhood and inclusion.

As the Caribbean Community's current representative and spokesman on health-related issues, I am constantly reminded of the real and devastating pandemic of HIV/AIDS. This disease does not recognize national boundaries, and it threatens to undermine future economic and social development and to turn back the clock on progress in many of our nations. I therefore urge the United Nations to continue its important work through the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS). We also look forward to a special session on HIV/AIDS to intensify and further coordinate our approaches at the international level. We have to continue the work to modify behaviours and embrace new attitudes in dealing with the pandemic, which threatens to undermine the economies and social fabric of many nations in Latin America and the Caribbean, the region now said to have the second highest number of cases of infection, after sub-Saharan Africa.

Further, my Government envisages a United Nations better equipped to preserve the progress that we have made in the areas of human security, peace, poverty alleviation, sustainable development and democracy, and to build on them. I invite the United Nations to be more involved in the debate on technology transfer, lending expertise in this endeavour by becoming a more meaningful partner. It should help to identify not only areas for technology transfer, but more important, the transfer of relevant and appropriate technology.

Time and time again, our small island States have swallowed the bitter medicine prescribed to us in order to participate fully in this global economy. But whenever we appear to reach a milestone, the post is arbitrarily moved. We urge the United Nations to become the genuine partner of small island developing States, the genuine partner that we envisaged. We further encourage the realization that a vulnerability index must be factored into any assessment of the needs of small island States. This vulnerability index must also be considered in planning programmes of assistance by the multilateral development, financial and State institutions.

We commend the areas of the Secretary-General's report that speak to human security, and we expect the United Nations to continue to play a proactive role in this endeavour. We urge the United Nations, through the Secretary-General, to impress upon the countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development that unilateral "blacklisting" of countries is counter-productive, and that any debate affecting the interests of small developing countries must be raised to the level of multilateral forums where all our voices can be heard. Also, the United Nations has to play a greater role in forging better understanding on trade-related issues.

My people, in voting my Administration into office, placed their hopes, their faith and their future in our hands. I continue to place their hopes in this Organization. We can ill-afford disappointment. The Government and the people of Saint Kitts and Nevis remain committed to the United Nations, and we pray for its continued viability. We truly hope that it will become the mechanism that best translates our dreams into realities. But as we look to the horizon of its future, I truly hope we understand that any future prosperity of our world requires a united international approach.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): I thank the Prime Minister and Minister for Finance, Development, Planning and National Security of Saint Kitts and Nevis for his statement.

The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Giuliano Amato, Prime Minister of the Italian Republic.

Mr. Amato (Italy): Delegates will have noticed that almost all of us are beginning our interventions by saying something like, We are gathered today to reaffirm our commitment to the centrality of the United Nations. Now I think that this is not just rhetoric; it is the right response to an essential need of the world in

the new century, which demands that the United Nations tackle the main challenge as well as the main threat of our future. This challenge and threat is the sharp division between those whose essential rights to security, to life, to dignity, to development, to health and to education are safeguarded and those — the many, the most — who are still excluded from all this.

The credibility of the United Nations will depend on its ability to overcome this divide. There are no prospects for anyone in the next century if we fail to provide fair prospects for everyone.

As the Prime Minister of a country that has heavily invested its energies and resources in the United Nations system, as the head of the Government of a major member of the European Union and of the country that will be chairing the G-8 next year, I must stress that Italy stands ready to fulfil its responsibilities. I will mention two examples: the Italian engagement in United Nations peace operations — we are now the third highest provider of military manpower for such operations — and our recent law on the cancellation of the foreign debt of the poorest countries, a law that goes beyond our multilateral engagements and de facto will increase substantially our financial allocations for development aid.

Precisely because my country has taken concrete steps, and is about to take others, I feel entitled to stress that we need bold and speedy decisions in relation to several priorities for action. To make substantive progress in poverty reduction is the first and main priority. The others are to improve the United Nations capability to handle crises, to make the defence of universal human rights effective and to mobilize the international community against organized international crime.

I will not have the time here to go through all of these priorities. Let me say a few words on some of them.

First of all, regarding progress in poverty reduction: the goal we have set for ourselves, halving poverty by 2015, requires radical efforts. These efforts are especially needed for Africa — a whole continent in danger of falling into a vicious circle of poverty and conflict, which we have to break. But the same could also be said of small insular States and landlocked countries. As we all know, debt cancellation is important, but it is not enough. The industrialized world and the relevant countries need a common strategy. We have to pre-empt any of the current emerging temptations for unilateral interventions that cut off the relevant Governments. There is no action without the Governments of the countries involved. We need a common strategy for this.

The less-advanced countries can and should develop political and economic reforms — actual steps and uses of the few resources they have for poverty-reduction programmes. The more advanced countries can and should develop a better mix of policies, blending measures directed at debt reduction. We also have to address the problems of middle-income nations, because poverty is an increasing issue in middle-income nations as well. And we also need to address the issues of open markets and fresh investment in key sectors, beginning with education and health.

I must insist on two points that Italy will put at the forefront of its positions at the forthcoming Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries and at the meeting on financing for development, and which I will propose again at the Genoa Summit of the G-8 next year. The importance of opening our markets by abolishing quotas and tariffs for the least developed countries — any effort is pointless if we keep quotas and tariffs vis-à-vis these countries, of allocating fresh resources to education, and of extending access to the new information technologies and to the fight against disease. My country intends to contribute directly to the Health InterNetwork suggested by the Secretary-General in his report to the Assembly.

I do not have time to go into United Nations capabilities to handle crises. I limit myself to saying that on this point I agree with the essence of the conclusion of the Brahimi report, and that Italy intends, among other initiatives, to participate in the training of the civilian and police personnel for United Nations missions.

Finally, let me say that responsibility and priority are the key words. They require the existence of multilateral institutions that are strong and perceived as legitimate. This is a crucial issue: legitimacy of the decisions that are taken by groups, institutions and any other body on the international scene. Legitimacy means the democratization of decision-making processes in today's world. Even sound policies, even

sound measures can be rejected if the countries called upon to implement them perceive such implementation as an imposition upon them. That is why it is so difficult to find and to pursue common strategies around the world.

This is the crucial issue we have to tackle in the future and that we have to tackle when revising the functioning and the structure of the different bodies of the United Nations to improve their efficiency, their democratic legitimacy and power of decision. These are also the criteria that must inspire a comprehensive reform of the Security Council.

I am not sure that the words we are pronouncing today, as most of us are so encouragingly meeting, will remain after this Millennium Summit. I hope that our commitments will remain and will inspire our future actions. I rely on the Secretary-General's promise to transform our commitments today and of these past few days into a common programme of action. This is what we all have to implement in this regard.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Basdeo Panday, Prime Minister of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago.

Mr. Panday (Trinidad and Tobago): That we are meeting at this level, in these unprecedented numbers, is an unmistakable manifestation of our belief in the capacity of the United Nations to be the effective catalyst for peace and progress, for freedom and justice, for inclusiveness and dignity for and among nations and for all peoples of the world.

The interests of the people of the world whom we are assembled here to represent will undoubtedly be advanced by the fuller understanding and the deeper empathy with the needs and concerns of member nations — large and small, rich and poor — that this Millennium Summit will engender. For this alone, this Summit is of significant value to the world.

We all face common challenges and common threats: joblessness and poverty, the globalization of narco-trafficking, the global HIV/AIDS pandemic, the continuing development and retention of nuclear weaponry, the proliferation of small arms, the degradation of the environment and, to mankind's eternal shame, racism, racial intolerance and religious intolerance.

I make bold to say that my own country, the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, has responded to a number of these challenges with a vigour and effectiveness quite disproportionate to our small size and our small population of 1.3 million people. We have, for example, introduced — and we are implementing — a regime of anti-money laundering measures that are close to the toughest and most comprehensive to be found in any jurisdiction of the world. This includes provision for seizure of ill-gotten wealth and assets which cannot be rationally explained.

In taking the fight to the narco-traffickers, we have forged strong and productive alliances with the United States of America, with Caribbean nations and with other countries.

We have confronted poverty with such purposefulness that the current United Nations Development Programme's Human Development Report ranks Trinidad and Tobago one of the five countries that have been most successful in overcoming severe poverty among all developing nations of the world.

By another measure Trinidad and Tobago has been notably successful in managing diversity through the strong commitment and adherence to the principle and practice of true inclusion in all areas of public life in our country. Indeed, out of our great diversity have come the essential spirit of our people, our celebration of life.

Those essences and our spirit were present here in New York, in the street carnival on Labour Day, on Monday. Those essences and that spirit were also celebrated last week in Europe's largest street festival, the Notting Hill Carnival.

You see it, too, whenever you hear the music of the steel bands anywhere in the world. Notwithstanding our modest achievements, small and developing countries such as Trinidad and Tobago and our sister Caribbean States face additional challenges and threats, among them, the danger of marginalization in the now evident realities of globalization and technological advance.

We also face the paradox that while our small economies continue to be genuinely vulnerable to external factors, while our fragile ecosystems are imperilled by developments not of our making, our graduation to per capita middle-income status

effectively denies us adequate consideration for the developmental support we so urgently need.

Our small economies are confronted by a changing trade environment in which the principle of special and differential treatment is being phased out. The international response that can enable us to develop the necessary capacity to exploit the opportunities presented by globalization has been decidedly less than adequate.

The 37 small island developing States, members of the United Nations, have special developmental needs which this Summit and the United Nations must not overlook. Over the years, Caribbean Community States have petitioned the international community for recognition of the Caribbean as a special area for sustainable development.

We have also sought support for the protection of the Caribbean Sea as an environmental treasure for the world. Now, we recognize the threat of new marginalization by the new disparities that come with the digital divide. On this score, we urge the United Nations to ensure equitable coordination in the field of science and technology, particularly information technology.

Next year the United Nations will host a high level forum on financing for development. The World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the World Trade Organization will take part in that conference. We make an early petition for the forum to produce an action plan that will include a framework for financial crisis prevention and crisis resolution based on partnership between public and private sectors.

We also make an early petition for a resolution from the financing development forum to give borrowing countries a substantial role in determining economic and social development objectives.

I take this opportunity to place on record the gratitude of Trinidad and Tobago for the pivotal role played by the United Nations in addressing all the social issues facing humanity. We record our appreciation for the United Nations positive response when Trinidad and Tobago moved to revive the concept of the establishment of a permanent International Criminal Court. It is our firm conviction that the crime of illicit drug trafficking should be included in the Court's jurisdiction. And after listening this morning to the President of Ghana, Jerry Rawlings, I add the crime of corruption.

While we examine the global concerns on our Summit agenda, most of us are preoccupied with the challenges with which we must come to terms in our own communities and our own countries. We must provide shelter, nutrition, health services, education and training, and security for our people, and we must, through our policies, deliver jobs. We must also directly provide assistance to those of our citizens who are still trapped in poverty.

It is our sincere hope that this Millennium Summit will in some small measure persuade the decision makers of the world, in the private sector and in the international agencies, that such human concerns deserve to be an important factor in all future planning.

May the blessings that we ask of God find full expression in the prosperity of all peoples of the world and in peace among all peoples of all nations.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): Before I give the floor to the next speaker, I appeal for respect for the limit on the length of statements. Members are aware that there are still 12 speakers remaining on the list of speakers for this meeting. Since we must exhaust the list for each meeting, I appeal to participants in the Millennium Summit to respect the five minute speaking time allotted to each speaker. This will allow us to hear all the speakers on the list before we adjourn for lunch this afternoon.

The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Marc Forné Molné, Prime Minister of the Principality of Andorra.

Mr. Molné (Andorra) (*spoke in Catalan*) (English text provided by the delegation): We are meeting today in New York, at the seat of the United Nations, to celebrate 2,000 years of our calendar. One thousand years ago the roads had become unsafe, the philosophies of the ancients had been put to one side to await the Renaissance and human beings eked out an existence in fear and poverty in a divided and unsafe Europe.

Now, in the year 2000, science has freed us from many diseases and some superstitions. The bloody wars of the twentieth century and the atomic age have made us aware of our immense and brutal capacity for self-destruction. The rationalism and liberalism of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and the failure of

authoritarian and totalitarian models have led to the advance of modern democracy, which is indisputably the best system of government for human communities.

One hundred and eighty-nine sovereign nations are meeting under the auspices of the United Nations in a spirit of planetary solidarity at a time of globalization and instant communication. Mankind has never been closer to the promised land, but at the same time we have never been so aware of the dangers hindering us from reaching it.

The peace of nations cannot be built, as in the year 0, on the supremacy of an empire, whether political or economic. The Governments of the world must lead globalization to areas of true cooperation between north and south, between large and small, because political globalization cannot come into being at the cost of small countries. Small human communities such as the Principality of Andorra, the peaceful heirs of a long history of democracy, must be able to maintain their presence without losing their identity. If political globalization does not include the small States, we shall be less in all possible meanings of the word.

The year 2000 should be remembered as the year of courage and not as the year of fear, like the year 1000. The greatest Assembly in the history of the rulers of the earth is to be found in this Hall. Today we know where good and evil lie. The San Francisco Charter and the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights leave no room for doubt.

In the coming years we must have the courage to speak out frankly. We must have the courage to condemn dictatorships, even if they have been set up in countries which are important for our economy. We must have the courage to opt jointly for policies of solidarity rather than reasons of State. This must be the year of ethics and courage and the beginning of a century of valour.

The attendance of high representatives at international conferences must be visible and continuous. I am sorry to have to regret the lack of interest aroused by the conference on social development that began in Geneva on the 26 June this year, unlike the 1995 Copenhagen summit, where nearly all of us were in the official photograph.

Andorra gives its full support to the millennium report (A/54/2000) of the Secretary-General, Kofi Annan. There must be fair globalization, reduction of the abject poverty which grinds down half of mankind and a safer world which acts more to prevent conflicts than to react to them. There must be much less military expenditure and much more medical research into AIDS, which is killing thousands in Africa and all over the world.

Mr. Gurirab (Namibia) took the Chair.

We also want more awareness and defence of the natural environment. But, although we in the small States are making great efforts to respect nature to the maximum, we shall always feel that the big States have to do the real work, and the fact is that they are not doing it. To the contrary, they are refusing to sign protocols and refusing to limit the unsustainable growth which characterizes those States, and in this manner, they are changing the climate of the whole world. It is obvious that we are all to blame in some measure when we follow blindly along the road of industrial consumption. At this summit these questions, which will condition life in the century we are beginning, must be discussed.

We have taken note of the invitation of the Secretary-General in his report, and we are taking advantage of this Summit meeting to sign the two Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, on the involvement of children in armed conflict and on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography.

We have also given our support to the initiative of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mrs. Mary Robinson, with regard to the declaration "Tolerance and diversity: a vision for the 21st century", because our land, Andorra, has much to say about questions of diversity and tolerance. We have lived through the wars of our neighbours and other wars in Europe. Refugees have always found help and peace with us. In the second half of the twentieth century, Andorra was host to immigrants, which multiplied its population by a factor of more than eight. All of us who live there try to make tolerance and respect for diversity more than mere words. We must learn how to welcome the diversity of human beings and of nations and, at the same time, establish global values about what is or is not legitimate. This is the great challenge for the future of humankind: managing to respect the cultural diversity of all while refusing to accept excuses, based

on culture or religion, for failing to apply all the norms of democracy and human rights.

The Acting Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Mikuláš Dzurinda, Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic.

Mr. Dzurinda (Slovakia): At the dawn of a new millennium, the human race is going through fundamental changes, within a global context, that are bound to have a significant impact on the future of humanity in the twenty-first century in all walks of life. Apart from triggering the process of democratization, the end of the cold war and the demise of the bipolar world brought forth new opportunities for many countries to enhance their international cooperation and, in some cases, achieve rapprochement. At the same time, however, it raised new challenges for the current generation and, in some ways, for the very construction of multilateralism, based on the United Nations Charter.

The end of this century has been marked by an escalation of negative phenomena, including intra-State conflicts, accompanied by humanitarian crises of tragic dimensions; gross violations of human rights; globalization, which, apart from its economic benefits, has had a number of negative social consequences, such as the widening gap between the rich and the poor; new threats to the environment; organized crime; drugs; disease; the proliferation of illegal weapons; and a soaring number of refugees throughout the globe.

Having come face to face with these challenges, the United Nations has justified its mission. The Slovak Republic is convinced that the United Nations plays an irreplaceable role in tackling a whole range of global issues, the solution of which by individual Member States on an individual or regional basis has proved to be practically impossible. The Slovak Republic, like other States Members of the United Nations, is aware of the necessity for the United Nations to undertake overall reform. This necessity has become particularly apparent in the light of the recent conflicts in the Balkans and the protracted conflicts in Africa, such as those in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Sierra Leone.

In this context, I wish to emphasize that United Nations reform cannot be complete without the reform of the Security Council, as that is the key body of the United Nations responsible for preserving international peace and security. An increase in the number of Security Council members and an improvement in the efficiency of its decision-making process and the transparency of its activities would increase the authority, representative character, credibility and efficiency of the Security Council in the future.

Our planet is a shared home for all of mankind. That is why the efficient resolution of global issues requires the active involvement of civil society and the private sector. In this context, the Slovak Republic supports the initiative of the United Nations Secretary-General with regard to the private sector, as expressed in his appeal for the adoption of the Global Compact of Shared Values and Principles in the area of human rights, labour and employment and the environment.

Slovakia also supports the proposals put forward by the United Nations Secretary-General with regard to the fields of social development, the standard of living, health care and the eradication of poverty.

The experience gained by the Slovak Republic from its involvement in United Nations peacekeeping missions bears witness to the potential of the small- and medium-sized countries for active participation in ensuring peace and stability worldwide.

Standing on the threshold of the new century, the international community must focus its endeavours on ensuring full respect for international law and, in particular, human rights, violations of which have recently been grave and numerous. Hence, Slovakia fully supports the expedient constitution of an International Criminal Court and subscribes to the Secretary-General's appeal to put an end to the culture of impunity.

Global developments lead us to reiterate the universal validity of the need to respect the human rights and personal freedoms of individuals as basic prerequisites for the freedom of nations and for their dynamic social and economic development and harmonious coexistence worldwide. The Slovak Republic is firmly determined to take an active part in defending and ensuring that respect.

The peace, security, prosperity and development of humanity in the forthcoming century will test our ability to combine traditional concepts, derived from the idea of the sovereignty of States, as the basic elements of international law, with new principles that are based on global respect for fundamental human

rights and on the accountability of individual States to the international community for the breaches of such rights. These new ideas and principles should spark debates among nations and, ultimately, result in a broad-based agreement within the international community, as was the case 55 years ago when the United Nations Charter was adopted.

This Organization faces many challenges. Allow me to express my conviction that, when the process of internal reforms has been accomplished, the United Nations will be able to react to each and every one of these challenges with the utmost tact and efficiency.

The Acting Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Costas Simitis, Prime Minister of the Hellenic Republic.

Mr. Simitis (Greece): The twentieth century has bequeathed to us admirable achievements in almost all fields of human activity. In 100 years, the world has achieved unprecedented results in the sciences, technology and communication. It has developed and refined ideas and practices on social cohesion, democratic governance, the protection of human dignity and the application of the rules of law, transcending national barriers and mentalities. The United Nations has played its part in assisting the transformation of the international community into a living organism, partaking of the same values and principles. The United Nations has greatly contributed to the maintenance of international peace and security and the creation of new equilibriums in relations between States, as well as to the redistribution of wealth between rich and poor countries.

Yet, neither the United Nations, nor the international community as a whole have succeeded in eradicating the scourges, which from time immemorial have cast shadows on the prosperity of humanity. We are still witnessing, in alarming dimensions, poverty and malnutrition, social exclusion, deadly diseases, as well as incessant waves of international and internal conflicts of extreme violence. At the same time, the very beneficial human achievements, of which we are all proud, have brought with them negative consequences, hindering the environment, destroying the quality of human life, threatening sometimes the very basis upon which we have built international and internal solidarity and respect for the fundamental rules of humanity.

Our task, therefore, must be to find new avenues through which we will control and gradually eradicate the causes of the scourges that torment all our lives. This task requires co-operation — cooperation at all levels — but mainly and, most importantly, at the global level because it would otherwise be difficult, if not impossible, to have positive results in our world of close interdependence. We strongly believe that the United Nations has a serious role to play in this respect. Its experience, its past achievements in all these fields, its nature as the only political international organization with universal participation, coupled with its specialized organs and agencies, are solid material upon which we may rely in our fight against the problems of our world. But, it goes without saying, that in order for the United Nations system to effectively cope with this heavy burden, it must be duly empowered both institutionally and materially. Greece believes that it is necessary to strengthen the position and the role of the main organs of the United Nations.

The Security Council, in particular, needs comprehensive reform in order to become more representative and far more effective. Its long history and involvement in international affairs has demonstrated that its inability to solve problems of magnitude is due both to its structural deficiencies, which date back to its institutional inception, as well as to the unwillingness of Member States to give it room to become effectively involved in matters where State sovereignty and vital interests are considered to override international concerns.

We have in the last few days heard about many problems that have remained unsolved for years even though the United Nations has taken relevant decisions. The Cyprus problem is an example. We should not allow this situation to continue any longer.

Now that we are all aware of the dangers surrounding us, as well as of the United Nations potential to deal with them properly, it would be unimaginable and unreasonable for us to waste such a comprehensive system and not to make full use of its precious services to secure peace and amicable relations and to fight all deficiencies in the world order to which we have just referred.

The United Nations can be an effective tool to solve our problems — the problems of the new world. It has the multilateral framework. We can and should, all of us, make full use of it.

The Acting Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Highness Sheikh Hamad Bin Mohammad Al-Sharqi, Member of the Supreme Council, Ruler of the Emirate of Al-Fujairah of the United Arab Emirates.

His Highness Sheikh Hamad Bin Mohammad Al-Sharqi (United Arab Emirates) (*spoke in Arabic*): On behalf of His Highness Sheikh Zayid Bin Sultan Al-Nahayan, President of the State of the United Arab Emirates, I have the honour to convey his greetings and regards to the President of the Republic of Namibia and the President of Finland for co-chairing this historic Summit.

The United Arab Emirates looks to this Millennium Summit with high hopes of achieving justice and equality among all the peoples of the world and of reinforcing the bonds of joint cooperation in dealing with injustice, violence, terrorism, illiteracy, organized crime, the elimination of poverty and contagious diseases and a horde of other contemporary international problems.

While we emphasize our true desire to seriously work with all the nations and peoples of the world in order to achieve the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and preserve peace, security and stability in our region and in the world at large, we call for respect for the principles of renunciation of violence, non-use of force and the resolution of disputes through dialogue and by peaceful means.

Hence, the United Arab Emirates persists in its endeavours to find a just solution to the dispute with the Islamic Republic of Iran arising from Iran's occupation in 1971 of the three islands that belong to the United Arab Emirates — Greater Tunb, Lesser Tunb and Abu Musa. We call upon Iran to respond to our declared initiative to peacefully resolve this dispute in accordance with the principles and rules of international law, either through direct negotiations or by resorting to the International Court of Justice. We are confident that such a step would strengthen and cement the bilateral and collective relations between the States of the region, and indeed contribute to consolidating the foundations of regional and international peace, security and stability.

In this context also, we call upon the international community, including Iraq, to exert further political and diplomatic efforts to alleviate the human suffering of the fraternal Iraqi people. In doing so we underline the need for the Iraqi Government to complete its implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions, particularly regarding prisoners of war and other detainees who are citizens of the sisterly State of Kuwait and of other countries, and the restitution of Kuwaiti property.

Achieving a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East requires a commitment on the part of the Israeli Government to implement the relevant United Nations resolutions, particularly Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). Those resolutions call for ending the illegal Israeli occupation of Palestinian land and other occupied Arab territories, particularly Al-Quds al-Sharif and the Syrian Golan; the return of Palestinian refugees to their homeland; and the legitimate right of the Palestinian people to establish their own independent State, with Jerusalem as its capital.

In welcoming the efforts made by the United States of America and other countries to arrive at a just, equitable and comprehensive resolution of the Palestine issue, we call for those efforts to be sustained in order to bring about the resumption of negotiations on the Syrian track, so that the countries and the peoples of the region may enjoy security, stability and prosperity. Also in this regard, we would like to express our congratulations to fraternal Lebanon on regaining its territories, and to wish it continued prosperity and progress.

Despite the multidimensional economic growth that has characterized developments in international economic relations, we are concerned about problems and challenges that developing countries have to endure, particularly at a time when global events have proved that international economic growth and stability require the participation of developing and developed countries alike. Globalization represents both a phenomenon and an important event in international relations. Accordingly, it must be utilized to serve the common interests and objectives of humanity.

The United Nations is still the most appropriate international forum for dealing with contemporary regional and international issues such as limiting the proliferation of proscribed weapons, cases of foreign occupation, poverty and debt, environmental pollution and similar issues. Therefore, we call for the reform of the Organization, especially the General Assembly and

the Security Council, in order to enable them to deal effectively with those challenges and phenomena.

In conclusion, we trust that the Millennium Summit will mark the start of a new era in international relations in which tolerance, peaceful coexistence, stability and respect for international law prevail and lead to a better life for all humankind.

The Acting Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Serene Highness Crown Prince Albert, Crown Prince of the Principality of Monaco.

Crown Prince Albert (Monaco) (*spoke in French*): The time of dreams and utopias has been followed by a more rigorous one, that of commercial realities. Political power has often found it difficult to prevail in the face of the growing influence of the globalized economy. The rules of the great planetary game are changing. This is a fact, not merely an opinion.

Peoples are confused. Many States are wounded and in disarray. Even the most powerful nations are in doubt. They see, not without bitterness, that they can no longer build history by themselves. Because scientific and technological progress have been so tremendous, and because the political, economic and social changes flowing from that progress are so rapid and deep, the millennium to come is an unknown. The San Francisco Charter is the only remaining immutable point of reference.

The Charter expresses the wisdom of nations, the rejection of war and violence in all its forms, and the need for collective security on the basis of respect for the independence, dignity and sovereignty of States, including the smallest among them. It also expresses the firm resolve to cooperate actively for the promotion of human rights and economic and social development. Our Organization must necessarily adapt in order to be able to assume its mandate. It can do so, and it is doing so at its own pace. That pace is imposed upon it by the complexity of its institutions and the often conflicting interests of its Members.

In terms of international security, the Organization expresses itself clearly. Today, it is better able to identify the causes of disputes and share the responsibility for their management. It must have more effective means to prevent those disputes, and to that end it should no doubt resort more frequently to carrying out research on peace and on the causes of conflict and violence. It must also more effectively combat threats other than military ones: terrorism; drug trafficking; trafficking in human beings, including the weakest among them, children; and the misdeeds resulting from funds of criminal origin.

It is no doubt in the field of disarmament that progress runs the risk of being slowest. Only the trust that our Organization can maintain among its Members will guarantee success in this area, so vital to the future.

In terms of human rights and humanitarian law, the United Nations has gained a set of remarkable instruments whose implementation will no doubt continue, albeit too slowly. It will be necessary for the Organization to ensure the strengthening and smooth functioning of bodies entrusted with their promotion in order to ensure the well-being and development of all human beings, in the present and in the future, regardless of their place of birth or residence. The Organization should also examine carefully how the new economic and financial powers are behaving with regard to human rights, in particular as concerns economic, social and cultural rights.

In terms of development, the metamorphosis of the Organization is complete. It constantly recalls that economic progress must also be social progress and that it must be in the service of mankind as a whole. Its approach is a pragmatic one, and its action is increasingly concrete. It will also be essential for our Organization to endeavour, within the context of the irreversible process of globalization, to respect cultural and linguistic diversity, through which peoples have nourished their roots and built their identities.

In terms of the environment, the Organization has been able to single out the true priorities and to warn people about the most serious threats to nature, which sometimes cannot be corrected. Over the past few years, the Organization has been able to develop ecological standards, which we must apply diligently and quickly.

Finally, today our Organization knows how to pursue its legitimate aspirations with regard to justice. New paths are opening up, paths of hope. Our Organization must deepen those channels in order to respond as quickly as possible to peoples' demands and sensitivities in this area. We have entrusted the Organization with the drafting and promotion of

standards and principles that are our most valuable heritage. It is our duty to enable the United Nations to continue to improve in carrying out these lofty missions.

We heads of State and Government, the representatives of billions of men and women, must thank the United Nations for its efforts, support it and, in particular, encourage it. The political Declaration we will adopt, to which the Principality of Monaco adheres fully, will guide the Organization's first steps in the dawn of the next millennium. We need more than ever a universal Organization, one that is active and responsible and guided by the most urgent needs of peoples, especially of the most disadvantaged. We hope for an Organization that will be a moral reference point for conducting the affairs of the world with integrity.

The Principality of Monaco, one of the smallest of its Members in size and population, bears proof, through its age-old history, that military and economic power is not sufficient to ensure the endurance of States. Their survival and development and the happiness of their people can, we believe, be firmly founded only in peaceful and harmonious relations among nations that are themselves inspired by equity and justice, as well as by respect for international law and universal ethics.

In opening itself more broadly to civil society; in cooperating more closely with economic agents; in involving public and private institutions on a more regular basis in its initiatives; and in radically exploiting the means of mass communication, including digital, the United Nations is striving to listen attentively to the peoples and, as its Charter calls on it to do, to act more effectively on their behalf. We welcome this and congratulate the Organization on it. The remarkable report issued by its Secretary-General further encourages us to do so and incites us to pay a tribute to the 50,000 international civil servants for their admirable devotion and selflessness — sometimes, as yesterday, at the peril of their lives.

We sincerely hope that our Organization will be able to pursue its noble mandates with greater authority. We reaffirm our trust in it, and do so without reservation and in the strength of conviction.

The Acting Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kuwait.

Sheikh Al-Sabah (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): I wish to convey the greetings of His Highness, the Amir of the State of Kuwait, Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, who wishes this Summit every success. I have the honour to read out his statement before the Assembly:

> "The Prophet's message was to guide mankind along the righteous paths, showing the way to justice, security and peace. Its ultimate purpose is to help mankind to live a safe, secure and dignified life.
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> "On the other hand, Allah bestowed on humanity the great trust of being endowed with a mind, the architect of all of our personal and worldly affairs. Thus, the human race was entrusted with the stewardship of all aspects of life on Earth, its water resources and outer space. Inasmuch as human beings are entrusted with the responsibility to conserve nature, they are required to harness all natural resources to their benefit. The rational and appropriate use of these resources must be exercised with a view to avoiding environmental damage and degradation.
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> "In the final analysis, however, humanity is a confusion of conflicting good and evil tendencies. Surreptitiously, the evil elements may gain mastery of an individual, turning him or her into what may appear to be a tool of chaos and destruction; similarly, a person may fall prey to selfishness and greed to the point at which he or she may be lured into denying others access to the bounty of the universe.
>
> "Some of us may occasionally feel that humanity is paying inadequate attention to the future of this planet, in view of the existing stockpiles of the implements of death and destruction and the relentless efforts made to develop and enlarge those arsenals of lethal and highly sophisticated death machines and materiel. In fact, there is an even more dangerous threat to human life: those elements who act in ways that are harmful and demeaning to the well-being and dignity of their fellow human beings. Looking around us, we can see in too many parts of the world people who incite sedition, hatred, discrimination, selfishness and chauvinism.

"These attitudes may in the end prove more destructive than lethal weaponry. In retrospect, we find that human societies have suffered in the past and continue to endure tragedies and massacres, even as we speak, as a result of those attitudes, which lead to the subjugation of too many people to repression and deprivation. The harmful exploitation and mismanagement of natural resources that sometimes occur through tyranny and narrow self-interest expose vast numbers of people to the pressures and anguish of poverty and destitution while, at the same time, other segments of human society enjoy comfortable lives free from epidemics, illiteracy and want.

"These preoccupations have dogged us for decades. Towards the end of the last century, we had hoped that humanity would at least have succeeded in alleviating their impact even if it was largely unable to resolve them. Alas, however, reality has defeated our aspirations. Indeed, in some respects, the situation is quite depressing, as we see these problems being exacerbated in terms of intensity, scope and human losses. This melancholy picture mars the celebration of our passage into the twenty-first century. It also casts a long, gloomy shadow over what would perhaps seem the greater part of the new century.

"Nevertheless, we remain hopeful that the new century will hold the promise of humanity's raising itself above those pernicious phenomena. It is also our hope that, in the new century, humanity will demonstrate improved rationality in the interests of mutual benefit and more civility in its interactions. We hope that humanity will collectively focus more on improving living conditions across the globe and on addressing its problems more effectively with a view to ensuring the universal safety and freedom from fear of all peoples. The conservation and improvement of our human environment should always be at the heart of our endeavours if we are to ensure that this planet remains healthy and hospitable to our future generations.

"Our work today is characterized by globalization, colossal economic blocs and fast-advancing technology. It is a world that is more aware of and sensitive to human suffering wherever it occurs. It is also a world that has become more responsive and willing to reach out with relief and humanitarian assistance across national and regional borders. Nevertheless, we continue to be challenged by intense racial and sectarian violence, the persistent outbreak of diseases and natural disasters, and an entire array of problems, as the Secretary-General has rightly outlined in his report.

"If we are to achieve better living conditions in the new century, those challenges must be faced squarely by drawing on human resolve, ingenuity and innovation. The bottom line in our common battle is the need to mount joint and well-coordinated international efforts to stem the tide of those problems, or at least to contain them or mitigate their impact. This may require some new modalities for international contributions and burden-sharing within the framework of thoughtful and agreed platforms and plans of actions. In our view, such moves would certainly help to promote understanding among peoples and civilizations and further consolidate world peace and security.

"Similarly, the international community, represented by the United Nations, should spare no effort in its collective endeavour to reject any attempt to resolve differences among nations outside the parameters of the purposes and principles of the United Nations and the overarching concepts of peace. The United Nations system must remain the primary and final resort for the resolution of international disputes and its rulings must be respected and upheld by all its Members.

"In the same spirit, however, we must now reaffirm our commitment at the individual level to rejecting any form of human slavery or denial of human rights, regardless of the excuses and circumstances cited to justify them by any political system or regime, even if that violation was committed by the Government of the individual's own homeland.

"In this context, we cannot tolerate the abduction of innocent hostages by a totalitarian regime that continues to hold them as political bargaining chips. The families of those detainees continue to anguish over the plight of their loved

ones, while the hostages themselves languish in pain. The sense of loss and frustration runs deep among those families who continue to pin their hopes on the international community to hold that regime accountable and to compel it to release those innocent victims and to account for their whereabouts.

"Every effort should be made to ensure that the twenty-first century will be free of war criminals and perpetrators of massacres, including those who plan for and participate in such crimes against humanity. We fervently hope that the new century, which is three months away, will prove to be free of wars, epidemics, greed and conflicts. Let us hope that we can channel our energy and resources into preserving our home, the planet Earth, which has suffered immense damage in the course of the past century.

"Can we close ranks and work together in unison to meet this universal challenge? Can we truly pool our efforts to make the world a more friendly environment for our children?

"There is no doubt in my mind that many world leaders share the same desire. After all, this is the desire of just about every human being. So, let us work to translate it into a tangible reality."

The Acting Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Tarik Aziz, Deputy Prime Minister of Iraq.

Mr. Aziz (Iraq) (*spoke in Arabic*): We would like to express our best wishes to the peoples of the United Nations in the twenty-first century, which we hope will be a century of peace, justice and progress for all.

It is true that this occasion is an opportunity for contemplation. To be meaningful, this contemplation should be sincere. Hence, let me present our vision and concerns sincerely and frankly.

When we discuss the role of the United Nations in the twenty-first century, we all agree on the importance attached to the Organization's success in facing up to future challenges and other longstanding challenges that continue to elude us. To be effective in meeting such challenges, the United Nations should indeed reflect the will of all its peoples.

The United Nations Charter was drafted on this basis. Furthermore, its provisions have stipulated that the interest sought should be the common and collective interest. However, the most important fact of the past era was that the ability to properly apply the provisions of the United Nations Charter was not often possible, due to the influences of the powerful States that dominated the making of international resolutions for their own interests. This situation was aggravated during the 1990s as a result of United States hegemony and domination over the international Organization for the benefit of its imperialist objectives. Thus, the work of the United Nations in the twenty-first century should be directed in the first place towards resuming the proper application of the Charter and the prevention of hegemony over United Nations resolutions and positions.

The essential step in this move would be to reform the decision-making process in the United Nations, particularly the Security Council, so that it could really reflect the will of all Member States. There is no guarantee, of course, for the proper application of the United Nations Charter unless all States, both large and small, adhere to the principles of the Charter, particularly the principle of equal sovereignty of States, without which the United Nations in the twenty-first century would be an extension of the status quo.

We disagree with the optimistic picture of globalization drawn up in the Secretary-General's report. We do not think that globalization will bring about benefits for all. What we have seen so far is that the benefits of globalization are concentrated in a few States.

The essence of globalization is to achieve economic hegemony by the few rich States, the United States of America in particular, as well as overwhelming dominance by Western consumer culture, thus threatening the cultures of other peoples, their different lifestyles and their system of spiritual values.

Furthermore, we view with considerable scepticism the invitation to transnational corporations and non-governmental organizations to participate in the work of the United Nations, and we stress the need for studying in depth the criteria for such partnership, its corresponding obligations and preventing its having an adverse impact on the principles of international organizations as set forth in the Charter, such as equal sovereignty among States and non-interference.

Ironically, the United Nations, whose Charter provides for the protection of human rights and human dignity, accepts being a tool for violating such fundamental human rights, through the comprehensive and unrestricted use of the sanctions system, notwithstanding the suffering those sanctions inflict upon the targeted peoples.

In the case of Iraq, the Iraqi victims of these unjust and unrestricted sanctions have amounted to more than a million children, women and elderly people during the past 10 years. Therefore, it is not enough to admit that sanctions are an ineffective tool leading to counterproductive results, and it is not enough to dubiously call for directing them in a better way; rather, the use of these sanctions should be restricted, and they should not trespass upon the scope of the United Nations Charter. Also, they should not be held hostage, as in the case of Iraq, to the will of the United States of America, which hijacked the resolution on the lifting of sanctions on Iraq from the Security Council to exploit it in the service of its own interests and hostile policies.

The United Nations cannot escape its moral responsibility for the consequences of the application of sanctions. This responsibility starts once the sanctions are imposed, rather than after their catastrophic consequences have unfolded.

We view with caution and scepticism the so-called concept of humanitarian intervention, since this call may be used — and, in fact, has been used — to interfere in the internal affairs of States by other States, particularly the dominating Power, the United States of America. We disagree with the assumption that the principles of sovereignty and humanitarian international law are at variance and that we have to choose one of them.

As regards the main challenges the world faces in the twenty-first century, particularly freedom from poverty and securing an ecologically safe future for coming generations, we believe that success in meeting these challenges depends on the cooperation of all States. In this context, the rich industrial countries have to bear the biggest brunt of this confrontation due to their economic capabilities, as well as in view of their responsibility for creating and maintaining these challenges.

The Acting Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Win Aung, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Myanmar.

Mr. Aung (Myanmar): The world that we live in today is different from that of the founders of the United Nations. In the intervening half century, the world has witnessed momentous changes — some for the better, some for the worse.

We have made huge strides in the field of technology. The world population has surpassed the 6 billion mark. The world has the ability to feed the teeming billions. However, people living in dire poverty and millions dying of hunger are common phenomena.

As we enter the new millennium, we must strengthen our Organization so that it will be able to cope with new challenges and new realities.

Members of the United Nations, each in its own way, are trying to bring development to their respective countries. In order to succeed, they must choose the path that best suits their needs. They must choose the path that is compatible with present-day realities, taking into consideration their history, their culture and their national ethos. There is no single formula that can be applied to all countries. It would be wrong for powerful countries to impose their systems on others. It would be wrong for the powerful to mould the developing countries in their own image.

In this context, let me once again reiterate that Myanmar is building a genuine and durable democratic system in its own way. While armed conflicts anywhere in the world, once started, are difficult to resolve peacefully, in our country the flames of conflict have been extinguished and the guns silenced. And yet there are some who would like to stir up the tranquil waters. That is when we have to take preventive measures. We have to respect the will of the 50 million people who would like to preserve the hard-won peace, who do not want to see any moves which would lead the nation back to total anarchy and disintegration.

In taking such preventive measures, the Government handles the situation in a most humane manner. We do no harm to anyone. We do not commit any atrocities.

The Government is taking a constructive path, while opposing forces are embarking on a path of destruction. Confrontational and destructive actions

can only impede the process of democratization of our country, let alone the achievement of that process.

The world is now experiencing another technological revolution — the information technology revolution. The industrial revolution has resulted in the colonization of the peoples of the developing countries. We must make doubly sure that the information technology revolution does not bring along with it a new form of colonialism. This revolution has the potential to benefit all mankind. We must also make doubly sure that the fruits of the new revolution are available worldwide.

With the advent of globalization, many new opportunities have been opened to us. At the same time, there is a very real possibility that globalization will result in the rich becoming richer and the poor becoming even more impoverished. At the dawn of the new century, it is imperative that we make every effort to eliminate these disparities. In this respect, we rightfully look to the United Nations to play a leading role.

In all this the role of the United Nations is of paramount importance. We must reform the Organization so that it will be equal to the task. While changes should be introduced to it, there are cardinal principles of the Organization and its Charter which are sacrosanct. The principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity, sovereign equality and non-interference in internal affairs are cardinal principles which have enabled the world community to live in peace. Therefore, I totally disagree with those who contend that these principles are outdated and that we do not need them in the new century. They are as valid in the new century as they were in the old.

It is our hope that this Summit will once again reaffirm the cardinal principles of international conduct. These principles served us well in the old millennium. They will serve us equally well in the new millennium.

The Acting Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency The Honourable Dato' Seri Syed Hamid Albar, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Malaysia.

Mr. Albar (Malaysia): We are gathered here to reaffirm our faith in the United Nations, which has served the international community for over half a century. It is indeed a critical and soul-searching moment for members of this Organization. We need to reflect on the past, draw lessons from it and see how the Organization can best serve the international community.

The Organization must continue to ensure freedom and equality and the right of humankind to live in dignity — free from hunger, poverty, violence, oppression and injustice. It must continue to be on the vanguard of global efforts towards the emancipation of all of humankind from these ills. It must also continue, through its development programmes and activities, to be an important vehicle and catalyst for the transformation of societies in the developing world.

The United Nations must be a more democratic body. It cannot champion democracy and good governance in the domestic politics of its members while ignoring these very same principles in its own operation. Reform is imperative for an Organization that was fashioned more than half a century ago in the prevailing circumstances of the 1940s. Its future viability and relevance to the contemporary world will depend on how successfully it modernizes itself.

For the United Nations to be relevant with the times and in tune with new realities, it must serve its membership in its entirety. The state of the world today is vastly different from that of the 1940s. Unless the United Nations discards its mindset of the past, it will be allowing itself to be a hostage to a bygone era.

The vast majority of the Members of the United Nations today are developing countries — many of them small and vulnerable. They look to the Organization — as the repository of their hopes and aspirations for a better and more equitable world order based on the principles of shared responsibility, commitments and obligations — as an important forum for the articulation of their views, but they also expect it to be responsive to their concerns and needs. The smaller Member States, especially those in the least-developed category, should not feel that they are being sidelined but that they can expect to participate in discussions on global issues and make a meaningful contribution.

Consequently, any meaningful reform of the Organization must place the interests of the majority of its Members at the core of such an exercise. There is also a need to reform the other organs of the United Nations, particularly the Security Council, the body charged with the maintenance of international peace

and security. It remains an anachronistic institution, reflecting the realities and power equations of the immediate post-Second-World-War period rather than those of the contemporary world we live in. The Council should be enlarged and restructured to reflect the new realities and be made more democratic, both in its structure and its decision-making process. The Organization cannot be said to have made the transition to the twenty-first century if the Security Council remains set in its old ways and procedures.

The United Nations must face current challenges even as it must continue to address the issues of the past century. These include, inter alia, the still-unresolved issue of peace in the Middle East, particularly Palestine; weapons of mass destruction; and inter-State territorial disputes around the globe. It has to come to grips with the increasing phenomenon of intra-State conflicts revolving around inter-ethnic rivalries, discrimination, religious intolerance or extremism.

The United Nations cannot but be compelled to play the leading role in the process of globalization which has overwhelmed much of the world. Clearly, globalization is here to stay. It will have a tremendous impact on human affairs and on the process of achieving global peace, security and development, and the enjoyment of human rights.

For many developing countries, unfortunately, globalization offers more challenges than opportunities. Greater globalization means increased vulnerability to unfamiliar and unpredictable forces that bring economic instability, financial upheaval and social dislocation, sometimes with lightning speed. To protect emerging economies from the negative effects of speculative capital flows, Malaysia has continuously called for an urgent review and reform of the current international financial architecture. Such reform is imperative if we are to ensure a well-functioning global economy that will reap the full benefits of the globalization process.

There is also a need for greater international cooperation to deal with the risks and challenges of the new and dynamic international environment, requiring measures and approaches that are sensitive to the particular needs of Member States.

Malaysia believes that the views of developing countries and their right to special and differential treatment must be taken into account in any multilateral negotiations. In this regard the United Nations has an important, legitimate and constructive role to play given its universal membership and moral weight on global issues. We commend the Secretary-General for initiating dialogue and interactions with the Bretton Woods institutions. We hope this will be further developed as an integral mechanism in the Organization's efforts to influence the deliberations of important international institutions, including those of the World Trade Organization.

The United Nations has an enormous task ahead in the twenty-first century. Let us all work together in a true spirit of mutual understanding and full cooperation to achieve our goals.

The Acting Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Amre Moussa, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Egypt.

Mr. Moussa (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): It is my honour to convey the greetings of President Hosni Mubarak, along with his apologies for being unable to participate in this meeting. At the same time, I wish to convey to the Assembly his views and his thoughts as President of Egypt.

We are at a historic juncture. The world is emerging from an old era which lasted for 20 centuries into a new era that begins with the twenty-first century. This new era is marked by an unprecedented, comprehensive global outlook, by scientific advances and breakthroughs that no one could have anticipated, and by the laying of foundations for an interdependent international community whose societies and individuals interact on the basis of transparency, ample availability of information and respect for the rights of the individual and of the community. All of this renews our hope for a future in which we can realize our aspirations and fulfil the dreams that mankind has always expressed through literature, poetry and visions.

The horizon of the future is vast, and so are the great, serious challenges confronting us. Our duty at this historic juncture is to establish jointly the intellectual basis for dealing with the new century, with its potential and its hopes, manifested in the information revolution and in the scientific advances and the achievements of modern technology.

In the few minutes allotted to us, Egypt would like to focus on some of what it sees as essential to

universal dialogue. With reference to our hopes and aspirations: those that have been achieved should not conceal the fact that most of the world continues to suffer from poverty, ignorance and disease. It still confronts the problems and dangers of debt, war, terrorism, illicit drugs, deteriorating environments, racial discrimination, religious intolerance, intellectual extremism and a host of diseases of our modern age. Prominent among these is the growing, seemingly unstoppable desire for hegemony and domination, and the desire to exercise the arrogance of power and to ignore democratic principles in international relations. All of this creates tension in the world.

Advances in intellectual pursuits, expansion of available information and the opening of channels for the free circulation of information must not mean the promotion of a culture of defiance and conflict with other cultures, with one culture unwilling to coexist with other cultures. Some cultures with a deeply rooted heritage and well established resources persist in rejecting dialogue and interaction. It is as if we were being forced to choose between the hegemony of the values of a specific culture, which we are all obliged to acknowledge, and a desperate struggle for survival.

There is plenty of room for coexistence and harmony among cultures and civilizations; we should affirm this so that we can build a new life.

Egypt cannot imagine the establishment of a new, stable international order without dialogue among all as a joint endeavour, and without a sharing of responsibility for the building of that edifice. In that connection, Egypt calls for a broad, extensive debate in the framework of the General Assembly, which is a universal parliament, to draw up an international contract with the participation of representatives of various legislative bodies and civil societies. In speaking of a new international order I am referring not only to issues pertaining to decision-making on matters of international peace and security, finance, economics and trade; I refer also to issues relating to women, children, population, economic and social development, health, disease, the environment and other problems of which we have spoken in the past.

We reaffirm the importance of narrowing the digital divide so that everyone can benefit from the revolution in communication and information technology.

Egypt calls for enhancing the role and effectiveness of the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security in the face of the new, changing threats that have emerged over the past decade. We also stress the importance of establishing a stable collective-security system. Disarmament issues related to such a regime include eliminating weapons of mass destruction, nuclear disarmament and promoting a more effective role for peacemaking and peacekeeping.

We also stress the importance of completing the debate on restructuring the Security Council so that we can strike a fair deal that will make it possible to increase the number of its permanent and non-permanent seats, taking into account the need for the overwhelming majority — the developing countries — to exercise their rights and responsibilities regarding representation and to serve as active members of the international community. Equal importance must be given to reform of the Council's working methods through increased transparency and democracy in decision-making, and especially to reconsidering the use of the veto. In that connection, the role of the General Assembly in the maintenance of international peace and security must be reaffirmed.

Last but not least, I want to congratulate the Secretary-General on the valuable report he submitted to the Millennium Summit. I call for a discussion of the ideas set out in that report in universities and other academic and research centres and intellectual forums. There should be comprehensive discussion of the report in the General Assembly, so that we can jointly address the major international issues it raises. It is here in this Hall that we should formulate and launch a plan of action to deal with those problems.

I wish also to stress the importance we attach to the recommendations set out in the Brahimi report on United Nations peace operations. The General Assembly must be prepared to discuss these recommendations seriously.

Egypt has been following the work of the Millennium Forum for non-governmental organizations, and we welcome its final document, which contains a plan of action stressing the importance of respect for national sovereignty and for the right of peoples to self-determination. It also calls for nuclear disarmament, an end to economic sanctions and addressing the negative impact of globalization.

Egypt comes to this high-level gathering bearing the troubles of its region. I take this opportunity to voice our aspirations with respect to bringing about peace and development in Africa, a just, comprehensive and lasting peace in the Middle East, and the establishment of a Palestinian State, that would crown the peace process that Egypt initiated more than 20 years ago. It is high time for that peace process to attain its final goals in a manner that will open up the horizons of a better future as we begin a new century and a new millennium.

The Acting Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Batyr Berdyev, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan.

Mr. Berdyev (Turkmenistan): It is a great honour for me to speak from the rostrum of this historic Millennium Summit of the General Assembly. First of all, allow me to convey words of greeting from Mr. Saparmurat Niyazov, President of Turkmenistan. On the eve of the Summit, we distributed a document containing an article by the President of Turkmenistan relating to the inauguration of the Summit, entitled "The Turkmens: Turkmenistan and the world millennia and the twenty-first century: the bond of time and civilizations". That document highlights our philosophy and strategy for the development of a neutral and independent Turkmenistan, its involvement in the system of global relationships and its vision of the role and place of the United Nations in the twenty-first century. I would like to draw attention to some of the elements contained in this document.

Globalization is one of the main trends of modern times; however, despite its objective and generally progressive nature, we cannot ignore the potential threat of social upheavals and attempts to homogenize political systems and to reduce the historically established diversity of world views and systems of cultural values to only one political philosophy that leaves no other alternative open. At the same time, we share the view that in the twenty-first century, facing new challenges, the United Nations system needs to be radically reformed. We support a United Nations reform aimed at strengthening and expanding the Organization's role in the world. We are against the dissolution of the United Nations into some new supranational structures. We are against any attempts by individual States or groups of States to usurp United Nations functions.

This applies fully in the case of such a serious problem as that of Afghanistan. It is our firm belief, and facts from the history of the long-suffering Afghan people most vividly demonstrate, that any outside interference in the Afghan conflict is doomed to failure. Dividing the Afghan people into "bad" and "good" brings only a new cycle of bloodshed. The United Nations should have complete confidence that Turkmenistan is a reliable partner, prepared to actively contribute to an Afghan settlement.

As regards ensuring stable social development and progress, regional cooperation is of special significance in today's world. At present our region is witnessing the formation of a stable system of active interaction under the aegis of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, which maintains partnership relations with the United Nations, the Association of South-East Asian Nations and other international institutions.

The efforts undertaken by Turkmenistan to export its energy resources to international markets serve the goals of development to no lesser extent. We are convinced that the contours of Eurasian security run along the routes of the future pipelines. In this sense, the construction of pipelines means not only profitable commercial projects, it also means the implementation of large-scale social development projects that go far beyond national boundaries.

As regards strengthening regional cooperation in Asia, it is highly important to ensure that the United Nations undertakes monitoring of the situation with regard to the establishment of a new legal status for the Caspian Sea. This new status should be determined by taking into account the interests of all the littoral States. Today the process of establishing a new international legal status for the Caspian Sea faces certain difficulties that could potentially have a rather undesirable influence on regional stability. Under these conditions, active involvement by the United Nations is considered to be very relevant.

Turkmenistan promotes respect, tolerance and humane attitudes in international relations and follows the same principles in its national life. In December 1999 the law on the complete and final abolition of capital punishment in Turkmenistan was adopted. This was the first such humanistic legislation in Asia. Turkmenistan acceded to the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political

Rights, which reaffirmed our intention to implement practically the principles of humanism, democracy and the protection of human freedoms and rights. However, in doing so we, as realistic and pragmatic people, believe that social development is an ongoing process that requires cooperation, the exchange of ideas and, above all, dialogue with the United Nations.

The interconnection and interdependence of the processes under way in today's world are evident. Their dialectics are built along the following line: human being — State — region — continent — whole world — humankind. Therefore, we believe that by understanding its entire responsibility any State and any nation — be it large or small — is capable today of influencing the entire course of world development precisely in accordance with this sequence. In line with this, international cooperation and dialogue among civilizations have to be free from any political dictates or preconditions. This is the approach on which Turkmenistan has always insisted and insists. This is an approach that corresponds to the moral criteria of the Turkmen people and their political philosophy.

The Acting Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Marcel Metefara, Minister for Foreign Affairs and for la Francophonie of the Central African Republic.

Mr. Metefara (Central African Republic) (*spoke in French*): Allow me first of all, on behalf of the delegation I am heading, to congratulate you warmly, Sir, on the initiative you have taken in holding this Summit, which is of such importance at the beginning of this new century.

As the Secretary-General has said, the Millennium Summit provides an opportunity to take stock and to consider the role the Organization will be called upon to play in the twenty-first century. The United Nations is indeed the ideal structure where all the energies of the planet should be united so as to confront the new challenges. This is why it is imperative for all of us to reform the United Nations to adapt it to the new demands of the third millennium.

In this regard, I would like to warmly congratulate the Secretary-General of our Organization and the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) for the serious manner in which they are preparing the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, to be held in May 2001 in Brussels. For its part, the Central African Republic is actively participating in the preparations for that important gathering, and we attach the greatest importance to it. We hope that, at this threshold of the millennium, the outcome will be commensurate with the concerns, which have to do essentially with combating poverty.

I cannot conclude without thanking the international community and the United Nations system for the actions taken to consolidate peace and promote democracy in the Central African Republic.

May this Millennium Summit herald a new age of effective cooperation for progress and peace for the whole international community.

The Acting Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Anund Priyay Neewoor, Chairman of the delegation of Mauritius.

Mr. Neewoor (Mauritius): I have the honour and privilege to address the Summit on behalf of the Prime Minister of Mauritius, who is unable to join the Assembly personally today, due to general elections in Mauritius, which are to take place on 11 September.

On behalf of our delegation, I extend to the Co-Chairpersons our very warm congratulations on their election to preside over this historic Summit, which is being held at the dawn of the new century and of a new millennium to reflect on the future role of the United Nations in bringing about a better tomorrow for all mankind.

I take this opportunity to express our deep gratitude to the President of the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session, His Excellency Mr. Theo-Ben Gurirab, and to Secretary-General Kofi Annan for their leadership, vision and tireless work over many months in preparation for this extraordinary event.

We are all aware that the world order we have today is rapidly falling out of tune with the realities of our times and that there is a pressing need for the international community to come together and address the numerous challenges before us. These challenges have been comprehensively brought out in the inspiring document entitled "We the peoples", prepared and circulated by the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, whom we highly compliment for the excellent and thought-provoking work he has produced.

We remain faced today with many old issues, such as poverty, hunger, disease and illiteracy, to name only a few, which continue to afflict vast populations across the world. While large-scale wars have been averted under the existing world order, which is based largely on the Charter of the United Nations, low-level conflicts continue to occur, affecting the lives of millions of people, including women and children in different parts of the world, particularly in Africa. The spectre of nuclear holocaust continues to haunt humanity in the absence of the determination of the nuclear Powers to reach agreement for the total elimination, albeit in a phased manner, of their nuclear arsenals.

We must acknowledge that the present world order has proved to be glaringly inadequate in the efforts of the international community to address the old issues, let alone the new ones, arising from the globalization of the world economy, the rapid growth of information technology and the resulting digital divide, the consequences of the environmental degradation of our planet, HIV/AIDS, gender issues and many more.

Most regrettable is that the gap between the haves and the have-nots is enlarging dramatically rather than narrowing down. A large number of countries, reeling under the debt burden and with ever-dwindling foreign development assistance, cannot provide even the basic necessities of life to their peoples, such as satisfactory nutrition, safe drinking water, health care, proper shelter and, to children, their right to universal basic education. And these are among the countries that are striving to establish and consolidate democratic values, good governance and adherence to principles of human rights.

Moreover, they are endeavouring in difficult conditions to restructure their poor economies to meet the exigencies of globalization. The small island developing States are particularly confronted with unprecedented anxieties in the process of globalization due to their lack of capacity to meet the new challenges without any special dispensation for them in the emerging global economic and trade environment.

From Seattle to Washington, D.C., from Davos to London, and in many other places, people have spoken and have signalled in no uncertain terms that the present world order, particularly in economic, trade and development areas, is unsatisfactory and needs to be reformed and made more equitable and just for the benefit of humanity at large. What the people say in the streets now the developing countries have been saying for many years in various international forums, with little success.

We are aware that the United Nations cannot provide all the remedies for the ailments of the existing world order. The economic and trade issues fall within the purview of other relevant international institutions such as the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the World Trade Organization, and these organizations must address them seriously and comprehensively.

But the United Nations can and must do more in the future within the mandate of its Charter to promote faster economic and social, as well as personal, human development. In this regard, Secretary-General Kofi Annan's paper "We the peoples" constitutes, in our view, an important blueprint for the future work of the United Nations, provided that necessary financial resources are made available for that purpose.

The founding fathers of the United Nations wrote its Charter in the context of an emerging and far less complex world order in the aftermath of the Second World War. In the 55 years since, the world has been transformed so much that today we call it a global village. All the 189 Member States representing the world community recognize that it is time to reform the United Nations Charter so that it better reflects the realities and dynamism of the world of today. In particular, reform of the Security Council — the decision-making organ of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace and security — is long overdue, as in its present form it can hardly be regarded as a democratic body representative of the collective membership of the United Nations. We need to rise above national interests that have so far prevented the urgently required reforms from being achieved and expeditiously bring to a positive conclusion our long-drawn-out deliberations on this subject.

The United Nations is the only fully representative intergovernmental organization we have, with a comprehensive mandate to address almost all global issues. It represents the collective aspirations of all mankind for a peaceful, stable and prosperous world community. In the fulfilment of its noble objectives, it must be supported fully and unreservedly by all of us.

Mauritius fully endorses the Millennium Summit Declaration, which sets a minimum but important agenda to be pursued by the world community together to ensure the well-being of humanity as a whole as we progress into the twenty-first century.

The meeting rose at 2.40 p.m.